

# LONESOME BAR

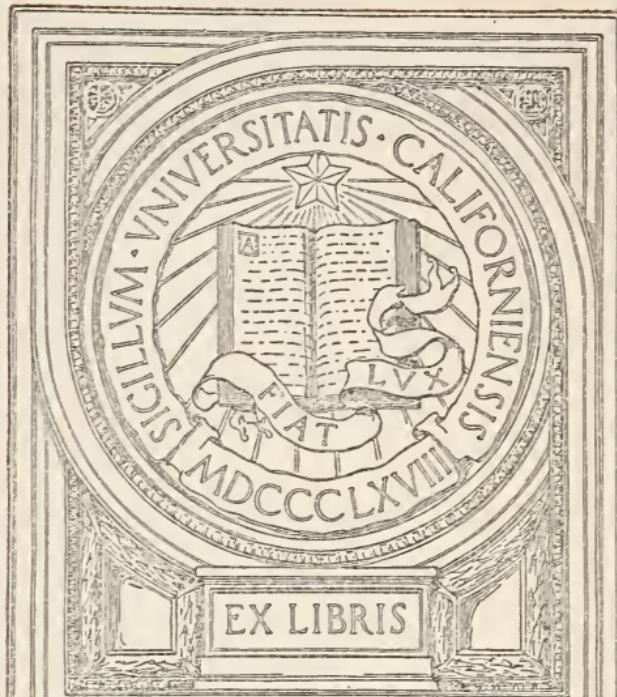
A ROMANCE OF THE LOST  
AND OTHER POEMS

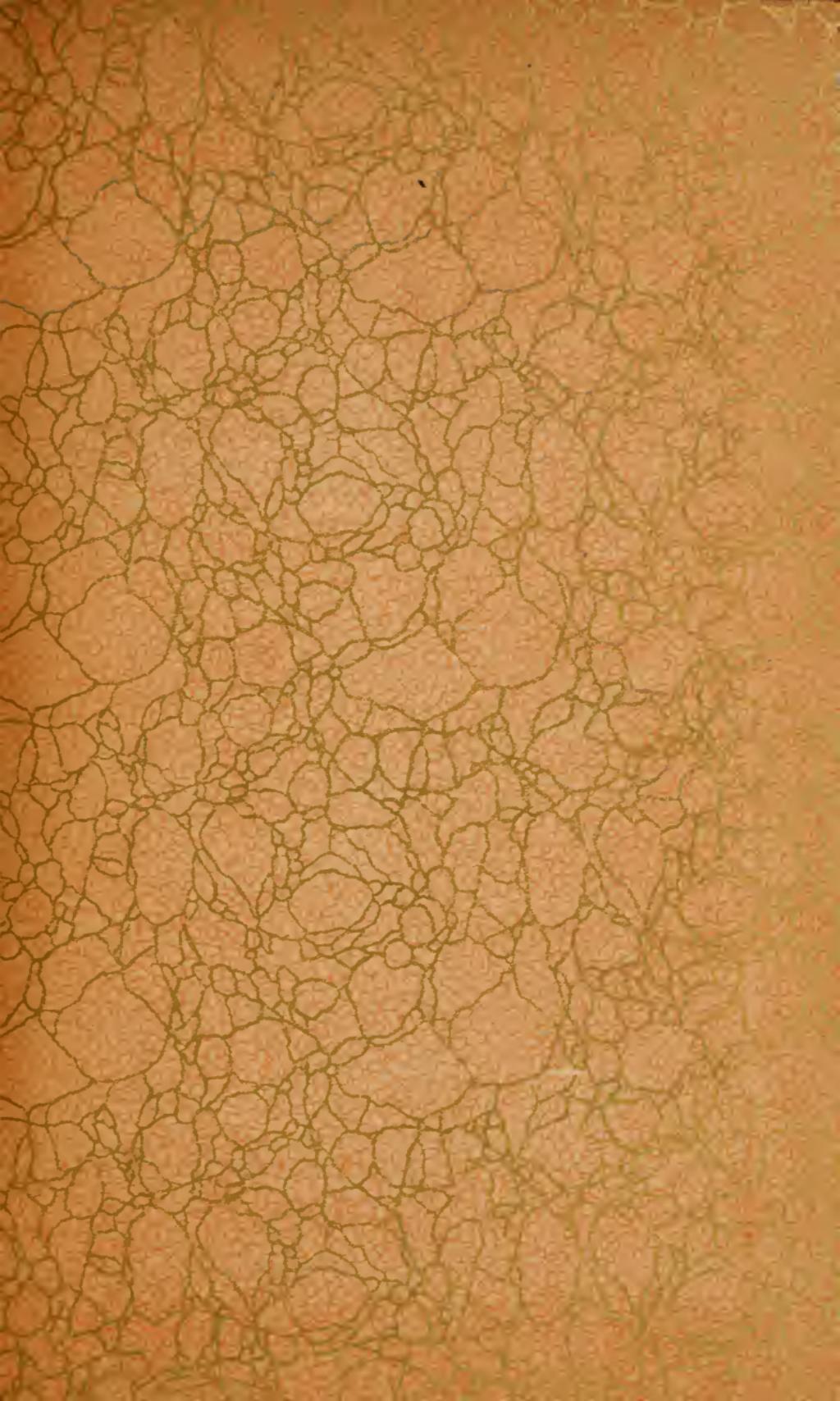
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By  
TOM MCINNES











LONESOME BAR



# LONESOME BAR

A ROMANCE OF THE LOST

AND OTHER POEMS

BY TOM McINNES  
*if*

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## A N I N K L I N G

THRO' my uncertain heart a moody tide  
Of mere emotion evermore doth steal,  
Fleckt with shining passions that appeal  
For solace that is evermore denied.  
But as the waters that elusive glide  
Thro' lonely forests doubtful yet reveal  
Some Ocean faith—so unafraid I feel  
To test with Death this heart unsatisfied.

And from that tide thro' late haphazard years  
I've gather'd crystall'd words sometimes—like these:  
Things marvell'd out from many memories ;—  
Uncanny songs, wherein withal one hears  
Some overtone of happier melodies,  
Or rhythm falling from enchanted spheres.



## F E V

### I.

UP from a sea that was Celtic,  
On a midsummer night of old,  
A fairy rose in the moonlight  
Where the swooning waters roll'd  
To a crag that was crown'd with a castle,  
Irregular, round and high—  
The castle bold, embattled,  
Of days gone by.

### II.

And a piper paced the ramparts  
In his own clan-tartan clad,  
With the ancient arms accoutred  
That his father's father had ;  
And the pipes that he play'd were chanting  
Of valor and Highland pride—  
To the tune of them kings had conquer'd,  
And heroes died.

### III.

Tho' only a lad come twenty,  
He could hold with any man,  
And well was he taught in the music,  
And well could he lead his clan ;  
And the gallant air he was playing  
He play'd as never before—  
Then he ceased and drew from its scabbard  
His bright claymore.

IV.

And he waved it aloft, exulting  
In the promise of coming years,  
And feats of arms and glory  
Got from the shock of spears ;  
Ah ! the glint of that jewell'd claymore  
That his father's father had—  
'Twill be handled with honor surely  
By that gay lad !

V.

But O, my Bonnie, my Bonnie !  
What sound is this in thine ears,  
That no man nor maid in the castle  
Nor drousing warder hears ?  
What music around thee is rising ?  
What orient notes unknown ?  
O out on the sea what is singing  
By the lone—by the lone ?

VI.

In a maze he listen'd unmoving  
Thro' the long sweet summer-night  
To the song of the water-kelpie,  
Till the moon sank out of sight ;  
And the kitchen maids of the castle  
Found him, at break of day,  
As they thought, on the ramparts, drunken :  
He was fey—he was fey !

VII.

And the thrall of a lordly ambition,  
And the combat for lands and gold,  
And titles and trinkets of honor,  
And things that are bought and sold,  
O thereafter he held them so lightly !  
But aye as he went on his way,  
Of a song he would be singing :  
He was fey—he was fey !

VIII.

The chieftain of all most gentle,  
Most ready with loyal sword,  
But not in the years did he prosper,  
And he fail'd of the World's reward ;  
His king gave his lands to a stranger,  
And his lady was faithless, they say ;  
And he died in a battle, forgotten—  
Well-a-day—well-a-day !

IX.

Comes something akin to a feeling  
That no language of men can define,  
Not to one in a million revealing  
Its meaning by symbol or sign,  
But told of in Sagas and olden  
Legends of longing and weir—  
A sound in a silence too golden  
For many to hear.

X.

Moments remote, unimagin'd,  
That come and go in a breath,  
Thro' the light of long days uneventful,  
In the pallor of imminent death ;  
In the fire of some red revolution,  
Perchance in the tapers' shine  
On some extravagant altar,—  
Some say in wine.

XI.

No, matter, if only—if only  
That sound from the silence it brings ;  
That ray from the occult reunion  
Found in the finish of things ;  
Unfitted thereafter, exalted,  
Uncaring, they pass among men,  
And the World, as they knew it, is never  
The same again.

XII.

Once, in the dull way of mortals,  
As I lay in a stupor, I felt,  
As I fancied, the palpable portals  
Of darkness commingle and melt  
Away into somnolent gardens,  
Hidden forever from day :  
Ah ! from them I never would waken,  
Could I stay—could I stay !

XIII.

Could I dream within arbors Lethean,  
Where the poppies that nod in the night  
Have yielded at last to the perfume  
Of roses enchantingly white ;  
Where Morphia lies, and her lore is  
Reveal'd, and her secrets are told  
In fragments of fathomless stories  
Forgotten of old !

XIV.

O souls made fit for the losing  
Of all that the World implies,  
Yet who tread not the pathway of heroes,  
Nor of saints that agonize,  
What vision is this that you treasure  
Like children, until you are gray ?  
Elusive, alluring forever,—  
You are fey—you are fey !



## LONESOME BAR

### I.

OUT of the North there rang a cry of Gold !  
And all the spacious regions of the West,  
From rugged Caribou to where the crest  
Of Mexican Sierras mark the old  
Franciscan frontiers, caught the regal sound,  
And echo'd and re-echo'd it, till round  
The eager World the rumor of it roll'd :  
How Eldorado once again was found  
Where stretch Canadian plains, forlorn and rude,  
Hard upon the iron-temper'd Arctic solitude.

### II.

Then woke the vanguard of adventurers,  
Who fret their souls against the trammel'd ways  
And measur'd hours of these exacting days ;  
They heard the call—the pirate call that stirs  
To reach for easy gold in regions new ;  
That once from lazy Latin cities drew  
Pizarro and his pious plunderers,  
And, later, many a buccaneering crew  
To sail their curly ships across the foam  
And loot the Spanish galleons upon the run for home.

### III.

So rake the annals of the knave Romance—  
The breed will not die out ! The fatal stars

That sway the line of loose Irregulars  
Forevermore 'gainst hazard circumstance,  
Illumin'd thro' those triple golden years  
A trail of splendid hopes and ghastly fears,  
Where only now Aurora gleams askance  
On the twinkling frosted bones of pioneers ;  
But it 's oh ! for savage lands alight with spoil—  
For ventures grim and treasure-trove on a stark,  
unheard-of soil !

IV.

And I went with the crowd who took the trail  
Over the icy Chilcoot ; side by side  
Who tugg'd and toil'd and topp'd the White Divide,  
Rafted it to Tagish, and set sail  
Down the rapid Yukon long before  
The main rush reach'd the mines. 'Twas no more  
To me than some new game of head-and-tail  
To gamble on ; but we drank deep, and swore,  
Around uproarious camp-fires, that we'd find  
Our fortunes on the Klondike creeks or leave our  
bones behind.

V.

But there was a hoodoo on me from the first ;  
Tho' everywhere I saw the yellow glance  
Of other's gold, I seem'd to stand no chance  
Locating claims ; the hot, mosquito-curst  
And scurvy days went empty-handed by,  
No matter what I'd do or where I'd try ;

And every day in passing seem'd the worst,  
Until the last day faded from the sky,  
And the long, inexorable Night had come,—  
Inlocked with cold, and weird stars, and dumb as a  
corpse is dumb.

VI.

I work'd a while that Winter on a lay ;  
Sixty below, and sleeping in snow-bank'd tents,—  
Say, that was the hardpan of experience !  
Just earning enough to live, and make a play  
On some infernal card that never won ;  
Or easy by some dance-hall beauty done  
For all the dust I had—you know the way :  
Snow-blind once, once frozen to the bone,  
While mushing with the mails between the creeks ;  
Then typhoid laid me on my back delirious for weeks.

VII.

The river-ice was breaking in the Spring  
When first I heard them tell of Lonesome Bar,—  
A haggard region hidden in the far  
Blank reaches of the North past reckoning.  
But the Sun was warm again, 'twas afternoon,  
And I was lounging in the Log Saloon,  
Ready to turn my hand to anything,  
When in two strangers came with a tale that soon  
Drew round the restless crowd, forever fond  
Of newer strikes, and farther fields, and the luck of  
things beyond.

VIII.

And well within an hour the rush began,  
For the strangers spoke of fortunes in a day ;  
Careless show'd us nuggets that would weigh  
A pound or more, and told how every man  
At Lonesome Bar had sacks of them. Stampede !  
Already the sleds are out, and the huskies lead,  
Uneasy at their traces in the van,  
And yelping 'gainst the time the packers need :  
Stampede ! Stampede ! All hangs on the moment's  
haste,—  
And it's every man and dog for himself on the endless  
Arctic waste !

IX.

But the fever shook me still in every bone ;  
Times I'd feel my legs bend under me,  
And every sinew loosen utterly ;  
And so I fell behind. Yet all alone  
I mush'd along for a month as best I could,  
And every mile I made was to the good,  
For the trail of those ahead in the bleak unknown  
I'd savvy enough to keep. At last I stood  
One day on a rocky bluff, outworn and weak,  
And saw beneath me Lonesome Bar, at the bend of  
Boulder Creek.

X.

Ah ! well I mind the evening that I came !  
The month was June, nigh ripen'd to July,

And the hour was midnight, yet the Western sky  
From the horizontal Sun was all aflame,  
When with my empty pack I sauntered down  
The one long tented street that made the town,  
Hungry and sick—sick of a losing game,  
And broke for the price of a whiskey-straight to  
drown

The ragged thoughts a-limping thro' my brain—  
Till I saw a crowd and went beside to hear what news  
again.

XI.

And there was a gaunt old ruffian, shaggy-brow'd,  
Who on a barrel, as far as I could tell,  
Ranted in drunken ecstasy of Hell !  
They suited well his theme—that Klondike crowd :  
Men dogg'd by shadows of despair and crime,  
With women reckless of all aftertime ;  
Miners, traders, villains unavow'd,  
And nondescript of every race and clime ;  
With the red police of Canada beside—  
For they keep tab on everything clear down to the  
Arctic tide.

XII.

But Hell ! What use had I for Hell that night ?  
And sullen I turn'd away, when I felt a whack  
From a heavy open hand upon my back,  
And, turning quick, my doubtful eyes caught sight  
Of a college chum of mine—one Julien Roy—  
Whom I'd not seen for years. Christ ! 'twas joy

To see the face of him again, and, quite  
In his old way, to hear him say, "Old boy !  
You're down on your luck I see ! Come on up town,  
Where we can talk and have something to eat, and  
something to wash it down !"

#### XIII.

'Twas like the sudden shining of the Sun !  
The flowers forgotten of old fellowship  
Went all abloom again,—there seem'd to slip  
A weight of wasted years and deeds ill-done  
Plumb down and out of my life, with chance to try  
The upward trail again, where he and I  
Could venture yet the highest to be won,  
Could let the very thought of failure die,  
And weave into our lives, from ravell'd ways,  
That cord of gold we talk'd about in the far-off college  
days.

#### XIV.

For Julien was a gentleman all through ;  
He stak'd me then, when I had not a cent,  
Braced me up and shared with me his tent,  
And help'd in every way a friend could do.  
As to the fortune that is ours to-day,  
I stumbled on it in the chancy way  
That all things come to me ; I cut in two  
The likeliest claim I found, ask'd Jule to stay,  
And work it with me, share and share alike,—  
And in a month at Lonesome Bar 'twas rank'd the  
richest strike.

XV.

One day I left him working on the claim,  
I had to buy supplies down at the Bar,  
When passing by the dance-hall Alcazar,  
Topmost on its board I read a name,  
" Beulah, the Singing Girl " ! The lesser lights,  
The Dogans, with Obesity in tights,  
And the boneless Acrobat—same old game—  
'Twas not for them I stay'd, nor clownish sights,  
But I wanted to hear a song—a song to make  
The feel of younger days come back until my heart  
should ache.

XVI.

Something went wrong with me that night, I know ;  
And yet 'fore God I would not set it right  
For all the North and all its gold in sight !  
White she was all over, like the snow  
That on the glacier in the moonlight lies,  
And lissome as a panther when it spies  
Its quarry where the forest branches low ;  
But the luring of her deep-illumin'd eyes,  
And voice voluptuous with all desire,  
And somewhat else beyond all that fair set my soul  
on fire.

XVII.

For Beulah sang a ballad to me then,  
Of perilous tune, so put to velvet rime,  
'Twas sure the kind that sirens in old time  
Sang from the weedy rocks to sailor-men ;

And all the while her eyes shone splendidly  
At something far too fine for us to see ;  
But oh ! at the ending of the ballad, when  
Those eyes sank down to rest alone on me,  
Full well for one such glance of hers I knew  
I'd tip my hat to her command for all that a man  
may do.

#### XVIII.

And so enamor'd on the instant grown,  
I sprang to meet her when the song was done ;  
She met me wondrous kind ; then one by one  
The others drew aside, while we, alone,  
Crush'd from the moments, in our eagerness,  
A wine of many years, as one would press  
Sudden the ripen'd grapes. Ah ! we had known,  
In some strange way that I'm too old to guess,  
A dream of life between, I know not how,  
That link'd her alien soul to mine with a dream out-  
lasting vow !

#### XIX.

You know how goes the custom of the Camp ;  
How swift the wooing where the pace is set  
To live all in the hour—and then forget !  
The midnight moon shone pale, like an onyx lamp  
Hung in the amber twilight of the sky,  
When we went forth together, she and I,  
And open'd yellow wine, whose yellow stamp  
Won high approval from the rascals dry

Who pledg'd us o'er and o'er, upon the chance  
To waste in regions barbarous that vintage of old  
France.

XX.

The first ones of the North still tell of it :  
That was the night the Lucky Swede made bold  
To bid for Beulah all her weight in gold ;  
And when, from mere caprice, my side she quit,  
And challenged him to make the offer good,  
With iron pans and a beam and a chunk of wood  
A rough-and-ready balance soon was fit,  
And the Swede brought up his gold where Beulah  
stood,  
And 'gainst her weight upon the other scale  
He piled his buckskin-sacks, while I—saw red, but  
watch'd the sale.

XXI.

In all my life I never felt so broke ;  
But when the balance quiver'd evenly,  
She threw a kiss to him—and came to me,  
And my heart went all a-tremble as she spoke :  
“ Olè, you're a sport alright—for a Swede !  
But I think this Sourdough here's the man I need ;  
I only play'd to leave him for a joke ;  
Let's call it off—and the drinks on me ! Agreed ? ”  
Since then for me there's been no other girl—  
And all the boys shook hands on it, and things began  
to whirl.

XXII.

And it's something worth, even in memory,  
To linger thro' those ample hours again.  
It may not be the same with other men,  
But clear on the topmost waves of revelry  
The soul of me was lifted cool and clean,  
Silent—to feel the surge of what had been :  
Content—to weigh the evil yet to be :—  
Then Beulah's arms closed warm and white between,  
And I let go of all in her embrace,  
And for a time escaped from Time and the latitudes  
of Space.

XXIII.

And the last was a sense of sound—a tremulo,  
So vagrant, sweet and low, 'twas like the thin,  
Continual twinkling tune of a mandolin  
To mellow-toned guitars in Mexico,  
Where lovers pace the plaza by the sea ;  
Where the deep Pacific phosphorescently  
Goes rolling smoothly 'neath the Moon, as tho'  
The influence of her yellow witchery  
Thro' all the sparkling waters off the Main  
Had sunken, sunken, drunken down like limitless  
champagne.

XXIV.

Slowly I woke. The last of the stars had fled :  
Only beside me Beulah murmur'd "Stay!"  
And kiss'd me, sleepy-eyed. But early day

Chills all of that somehow ; I turned instead,  
Thinking to leave her dreaming, I confess ;  
Yet even in that gray light her loveliness,  
And certain drowsy dulcet words she said,  
Charm'd my heart to hers in a last caress—  
Chained if you like, and clinch'd with a parting smile—  
What then ? In the round of the World I've found  
naught else so well worth while.

xxv.

Far up a valley, where the summer-rills  
Long ages thro' the glacial-drift have roll'd,  
I work'd in gravel studded thick with gold  
For days and days on the double-shift that kills.  
Yet oft, to hear the echoes ring and stir  
That vacant valley like a dulcimer,  
I flung her name against the naked hills,  
And crimson'd all the air with thoughts of her ;  
While 'mong the fair returning stars I'd see  
Pale phantoms of her chill, sweet face receding  
endlessly,

xxvi.

Till I could stand the pull of it no more ;  
I, who as a fool knew every phase  
Of woman's lighter love, and love's light ways,  
Had felt no passion like to this before.  
As the lost drunkard's longing at its worst,  
And keen as the craving of the opium-curst,  
Was the elemental lust that overbore

My very body till it gasp'd athirst,  
As one in some fierce desert dying dreams  
Of snowy peaks and valleys green with unavailing  
streams.

XXVII.

And Julien, good old Julien, knowing all,  
Pretended not to know, but said he guess'd  
That I had overwork'd myself, and best  
Lay off a spell in town. Then I let fall  
My useless tools, and wash'd and got in trim  
For the long ten miles ahead. The trail was slim,  
And crawl'd at times 'gainst some sheer granite wall,  
Or lost itself 'mong boulders huge and grim ;  
But dreaming of her I pick'd a buoyant way,  
Descending easy to the Bar at ending of the day.

XXVIII.

That region was abandon'd years ago,  
And Lonesome Bar is to the wild again,  
Yet still it haunts me as I saw it then :—  
Far up in the banner'd West a crimson glow,  
And a silver crescent on its edge aslant,  
With jewell'd Venus sinking jubilant  
Thro' opal spaces of the vault below ;  
Then goblin rocks and waterfalls and scant  
Green tamarac around the white marquee  
Where Beulah lodg'd—and there was ending of the  
trail for me.

XXIX.

Ending of the trail—for she was there !  
Sylph-like I saw her figure thro' the haze  
Made of the twilight and the camp-fire blaze ;  
And the piney odors passing thro' the air  
So pure I took for random kisses blown  
From her red mouth to mine, while yet unknown  
My whereabouts ; then wholly unaware  
I stole upon her standing there alone,  
And sudden she was mine without appeal,  
And lip to lip within my arms made all my fancies  
real.

XXX.

Shall I forget the words she said to me ?  
Nay, I believ'd them—I believe them yet !  
She told me how she dream'd that we had met  
Where dreams are true ; and then how endlessly,  
Like some lost dove, she roamed this evil world  
Seeking for me ; how now her wings were furl'd,  
And I should bide with her, till I should see  
This whitest secret in her soul impearl'd ;  
And her songs were all for me, I heard her say,—  
For me, for me and only me, forever and a day !

XXXI.

Then pass'd the last good hours I ever knew ;  
I lit my pipe, sat on a log, and look'd  
At her and her neat hands that neatly cook'd  
A supper hot and homely—just for two ;

And out in God's sweet air, beside the fire,  
Where comrade ways but strengthen'd Love's desire,  
We made it up to marry then for true,  
And I thought how all my life I'd never tire  
Of loving her, her eyes, her voice, her form,  
Her charm of something unreveal'd forever young  
and warm.

### XXXII.

But at last, as night drew on, she rose and said :  
" I'd talk with you till dawn, dear, if talk  
Could hold my audience or charm the clock,  
But I musn't miss my turn, so come ahead ! "  
Down at the theatre the crowd was thin,  
Perhaps two score, no more, as we went in ;  
But the manager was hanging out his red  
Big-letter'd signal-lantern to begin,  
When from the street, crescendo, came a roar,  
Nearer and still nearer, till it reach'd the dance-hall  
door.

### XXXIII.

Beulah stood ready on the stage, and the black  
Professor at the crack'd piano play'd  
His overture twice through, but no one stay'd,  
So I joined in where all were crowding back  
To where the row was on. "Speech, Mac, speech ! "  
They cried, as up the aisle they rush'd to reach  
Where Beulah stood, confused. "It's Hellfire  
Mac ! "

I whisper'd her, " and he's drunk and wants to  
preach ! "

" What ! why sure—whoever he is—come dear,  
That lets me off for a while, you know ; come on—  
come on in here !

XXXIV.

And laughing softly she drew me aside  
Into a rough alcove, her dressing-room,  
Curtain'd from the stage, and half in gloom,  
When at a sound her eyes 'gan staring wide,  
And she clutch'd my arm. Twas not the pious  
drone,  
But a fearsome something in the undertone  
Of the ruin'd Calvinist, whose soul espied  
Damnation toppling from the great White Throne  
Upon the woeful habiters of Earth,  
That somehow check'd the crowd that night, and  
still'd its shallow mirth.

XXXV.

And Beulah, more than all like one entrall'd,  
Smother'd a moan, and dumbly motioning  
For me to follow, crept into the wing  
Close up to him. Bearded, gray and bald,  
With eyes sunk gleaming under beetling shag,  
And face rough-chisel'd like a granite crag,  
He tower'd above us all ; but so appall'd

He seem'd that scarce his drunken tongue could  
drag

Meet words to match his ghastly fantasies,  
Yet I remember some in Gaelic accents drawn like  
these :

XXXVI.

“Last night, my friens, she dreamp't she was a snake,  
Prodigious as wass nefer seen before :  
Ha, ta Mac an Diaoul !—ta Peishta-Mor !  
For when she moved she made ta mountains quake,  
And all ta waters of ta oceans roll  
In frightnet waves from Pole to frozen Pole ;  
While efermore her starving body'd ache  
So bitterly ta pain she couldna thole,  
But twistit round and round, till she was curl'd  
In endless coils of blastit flesh about ta blastit World.

XXXVII.

“For in those days she was ta only thing ;  
There wass no man nor woman left at all ;  
No fish to swim, no beast to run or crawl,  
No bird nor butterfly to spread its wing ;  
Around ta World herself wass all alone,  
For all that efer lived to her had grown ;  
And Winter, that would nefermore be Spring,  
Now glowert silent ofer every zone :  
Then liftit she her head into ta sky  
To spit ta last great blasphemy into God's face—  
and die.

XXXVIII.

“ But oh ! ta silence of ta endless sky—  
And oh ! ta blackness of ta endless Night !  
Where all ta stars can nefer make it light—  
Where in ta empty, like a Defil’s eye,  
Ta eerie Sun, grown small and smooth and cold,  
Stared down upon her doom ordain’d of old !  
And she torment—and she couldna tell forwhy—  
With agonies in every quaking fold,  
Where only flowit poison streams for blood :  
And still she hiss’d and spit and curst—and still there  
wass no God !

XXXIX.

“ But at ta last she felt ta power to make  
Ta great escape, and finish all her hurt ;  
Ta Spirit moved her, and her body girt  
Its straining coils until ta World she brake  
To splinter’d rocks that ground and crash’d and  
roar’d,  
While all ta inner fires reek’d up and pour’d  
In fury round ta universal Snake—  
Consuming in ta vengeance of ta Lord ! ”  
We never heard the meaning of his dream,  
For sudden thro’ the building rang a wild hysterick  
scream.

XL.

And Beulah springing frenzied to the stage,  
And the old man halting face to face with her,

Too swift and strange for any theatr  
Follow'd a scene whose measure none could gauge,  
Only we felt its mad reality.

“That man's my father—keep him back from me !”  
I heard her cry, while horror blent with rage  
Upon the other's face. “A fient I see !  
A damit fient of Hell, who stole my name !  
Beulah, ta harlot, come again to cross my face with  
shame !”

XLI.

I saw the old man grip and throttle her ;  
I saw her choking, and her white hand dart  
Down to the knife that flashed—and found his heart !  
I saw him reel and fall—I saw the blur  
Of blood that gush'd upon her heaving breast  
Out of his own ! Ah ! God, how quick the rest !  
Ere I or any one of us could stir,  
Full to the hilt that fatal knife she press'd  
Into her side, that ran and reek'd with red,  
As she fell dead upon the stage where lay her father  
dead.

XLII.

Moments there are that gleam beyond all Time !  
Blown from enormous Years ! O name that seems  
To hearken back thro' vague primeval dreams !  
O maid remember'd from the young, sublime,  
Untrammel'd days when God foregathered us !  
My woman still—grown strangely perilous !  
All in a moment marr'd with scarlet crime,

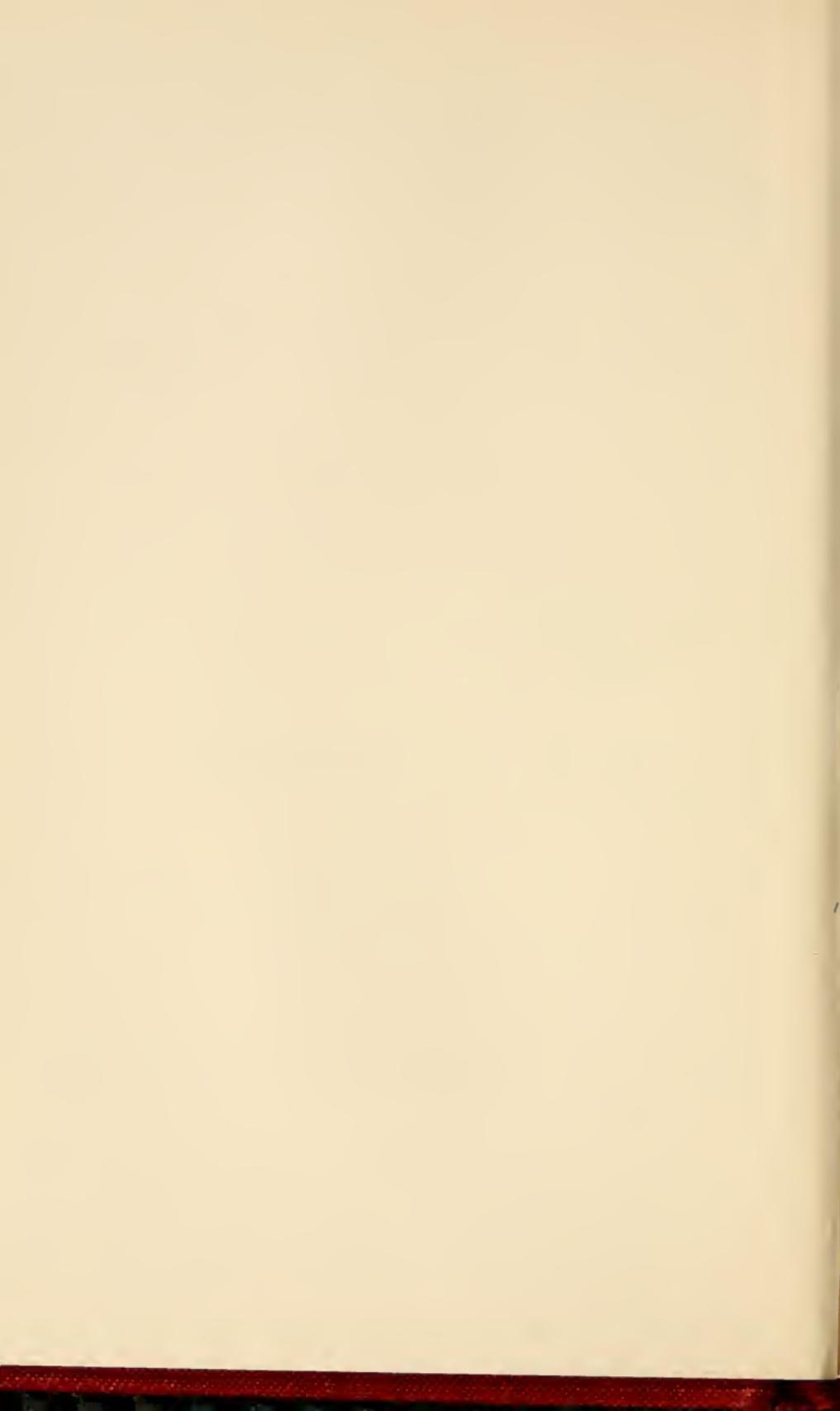
And lost before mine eyes incredulous !  
My woman still—tho' I go babbling dazed  
At thought of her and her father damn'd, and a Hell  
of things gone crazed !

XLIII.

How since that hour again and yet again  
I've play'd the fool with Death ! Go let him take  
What shape he please, I'll meet him wide awake,  
And keep a date with him—no matter when !  
Mad, I tell you—mad, I've laughed to hear  
In Wintertime the mad gray-wolves draw near  
And circle round me, all unarm'd—and then,  
Snapping their teeth, slink back and howl with fear :  
God knows of what ! So queer it seem'd, almost  
I think they saw beside me there old Hellfire's  
drunken ghost !

XLIV.

Lonesome Bar ! Too far—too far and old  
The hollow sound of it now comes to me  
To quicken this sick heart that crazily  
Goes lurching on to everlasting cold !  
Fill up my glass ! What game have I to play  
But drink into this drear, indifferent day,  
Some brief delirium, wherein to hold  
A phantom floating goldenly away  
Beyond the zenith of my soul, as bright  
Aurora with her dreamlight haunts the hopeless Arctic  
night !



## THE WRONG WAY

### I.

I WOKE to find me lying in  
A lonely desert place,  
Where ever-shifting silver sands  
Caress'd my hands and face ;  
Of hill or tree or human thing  
I saw no sign or trace.

### II.

But the lovely dreams that children dream  
Were never half so fair :  
Oh to that lone awakening  
I can no thing compare !  
I laugh'd for mere delight to breathe  
The moving golden air.

### III.

I kiss'd my naked arms, my heart  
With subtle rapture beat  
When shapely hands, blue-vein'd and wan,  
I laid upon my feet :  
The trickling sands upon them seem'd  
Like waters cool and sweet.

### IV.

And loosely I was clad in white,  
With a girdle at my waist ;  
And from my soul seem'd every stain

Of care and pain effaced :  
A nodding wreath of poppy flowers  
Upon my brow was placed.

V.

And long I look'd in silence o'er  
The silvery expanse ;  
Anon with music's soft employ  
I did my joy enhance :  
No siren e'er had sweeter voice  
To give it utterance.

VI.

But that—ah that would not suffice—  
The more I sang the more  
Methought the sands alluringly  
Did beckon me explore  
What splendid city lay beyond—  
What foam-besprent sea-shore !

VII.

Then up I rose and sought the West,  
Wherein the Sun declin'd ;  
And light and merrily I flew,  
While ever blew behind,  
Outspreading wide my yellow hair,  
A perfume-laden wind.

VIII.

On and on and ever on,  
With white, untiring feet ;

And over sands interm'nable  
    Ne'er fled gazelle so fleet  
To find what faery thing might be  
    Where sky and desert meet.

IX.

How many a sore and stricken heart  
    Might then have envied me  
That soothing, virgin desert land !—  
    So lonely and so free !  
Seclusion sweet commingled all  
    With sunlit liberty.

X.

And soon with scarce a motion of  
    My own I smiled to find  
How all unstriving I did fly :—  
    Then reckless I resign'd  
My body as a burden blithe  
    Unto the eager wind.

XI.

And on and on and ever on  
    I held my steady way ;  
And felt the passion of that flight  
    No distance might allay ;  
Not e'en the stars' sweet benison  
    At ending of the day.

XII.

But with amaze I saw at last  
How huge the Sun did shine ;  
And this also I marvell'd o'er—  
It did no more decline,  
But red and eerie linger'd on  
The far horizon line.

XIII.

Yet on and on and ever on  
The silver sands I spurn'd,  
Till in the nearing Western sky  
My ghastly eye discern'd  
What awful flames were writhing where  
The seeming Sun had burn'd.

XIV.

And from those flames there rear'd aloft  
Envenom'd smoke and fume ;  
Riven by many a fiery streak  
The pitchy reek did loom  
Prodigious thro' the night that lour'd  
Above that Pit of Doom.

XV.

Then went the sands to ashes gray  
That smoulder'd 'neath my feet ;  
The wind, a tempest horrible,  
Now baffled all retreat ;

And soon upon my blanched face  
I felt the searing heat.

XVI.

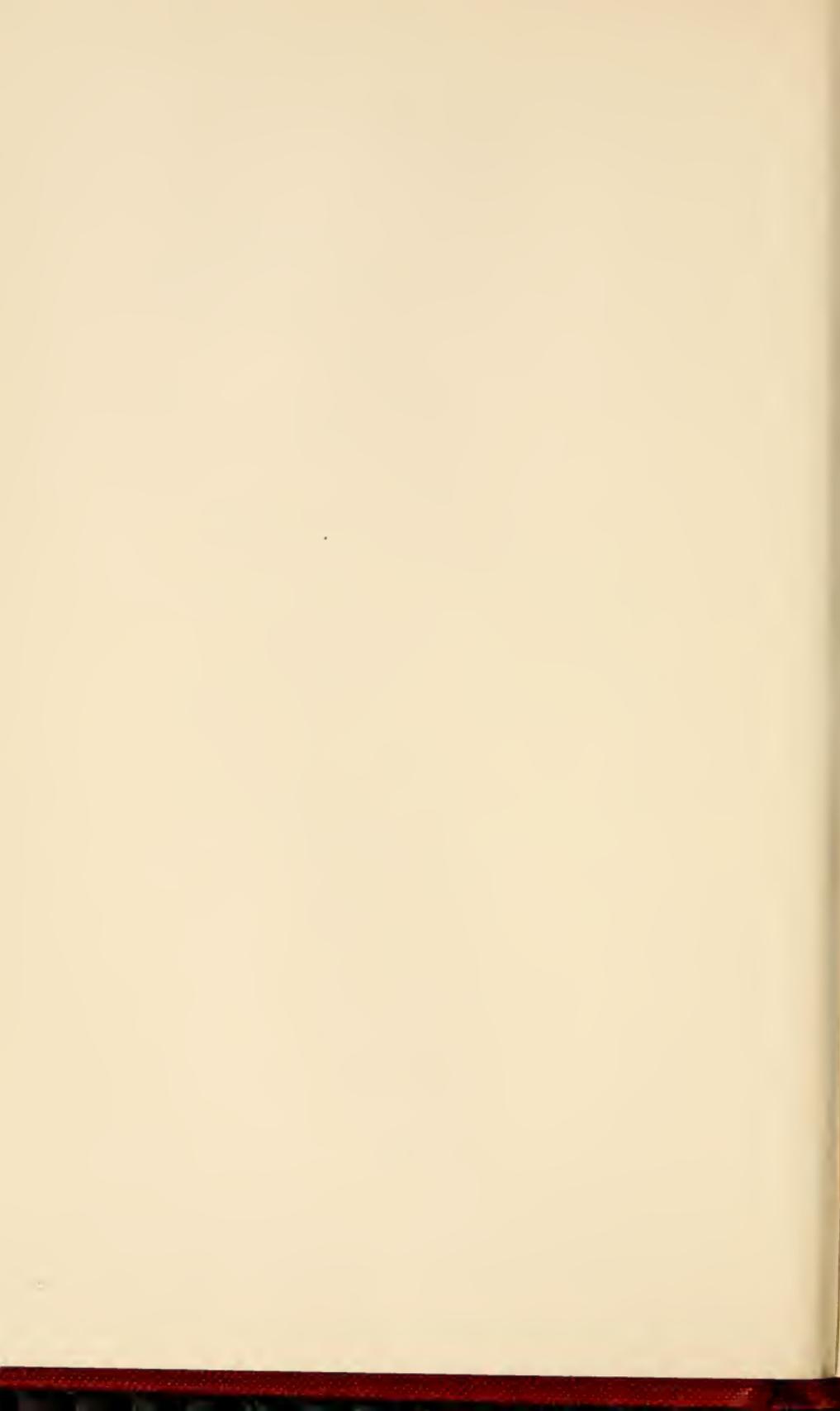
The wreath of scarlet poppy-flowers  
Fell withering and dead ;  
The scars upon my burning brow  
Were scarlet now instead ;  
My girdle to a serpent turn'd,  
With fang'd and fiery head.

XVII.

And all my hair, now raven-black,  
And monstrous over-grown,  
That sheer against the falling night  
With drear affright had flown,  
Around me in all strangling shapes  
Of Horror now was blown.

XVIII.

Till came the end where seems no end,—  
My body sway'd and whirl'd  
Frantic on the lurid edge  
Where Hell doth hedge the World ;—  
Then down the scarlet Pit of Doom,  
Shrieking to God, was hurl'd !



## THE RIME OF JACQUES VALBEAU

### I.

One August afternoon I saw,  
Somewhere back of Ottawa,  
Among the oldest hills,  
A young and most alluring squaw,  
Togg'd in a buckskin petticoat,  
With buckskin fringe and frills :  
Catamount-claws were at her throat,  
Fixt on a catgut string,  
With copper beads and color'd quills,—  
O she was the dreamliest thing !  
Clean and cool as the dews that cling  
To the tiger-lilies on those hills  
Thro' the golden August dawns ;  
For the rest—the sunlight gleam'd  
On breasts and arms and legs that seem'd  
Moulded brownly out of bronze :  
Shapely, slender, debonaire,  
From her coils of blue-black hair  
To her dainty mocassins :  
And I met her, for my sins,  
Somewhere back of Ottawa,  
Among the oldest hills.

### II.

Long ago in the earlies  
A Frenchman lived in France ;  
Gaunt he was like an eagle,

With an evil eagle glance :  
One eye was black and one was blue,  
And the black one look'd straight into you,  
    While the blue one leer'd askance,  
    Most sinfully in Paris.  
But it was wiser not to try  
    To hinder him or harass,  
But quietly to pass him by,  
    In the sinful streets of Paris ;  
For his arm was strong, and his sword was long,  
    And when he made sword-plays,  
'Twas hard to look him the eye,  
    Because he look'd two ways ;  
The black one look'd straight into you,  
And the blue one where he'd pink you through,  
And that was a trick entirely new  
    To people then in Paris.  
O he had small fears of the musketeers  
    Or the macaroons of Paris !  
And he had his time, and he made most free,  
And he lived in great ribalderie,  
    In the sinful streets of Paris ;  
But at last those evil eyes in his head  
On whom they fell, or so 'tis said,  
    Brought such annoy and harass,  
That when King Louis heard of it,  
    He order'd him from Paris :  
Yes ; not for the evil life he led,  
    Nor the ways that he walk'd unfit,

But for those two evil eyes in his head,  
They press'd him out of Paris.

III.

'Twas long ago in the earlies,  
And he thought to take a chance  
For fortune in the fur-trade,  
So he sail'd away from France,  
In a crooked ship, with a crooked deck,  
That sprang a leak and went to wreck  
Five hundred miles from our Quebec,

At the mouth of our Saint Lawrence.

How then he fared I do not know,  
'Twas long ago, but this is so,  
That up the river, paddling slow,  
Half-starv'd, at length he reach'd Quebec,  
And told his tale of dismal wreck,—  
His name was Jacques Valbeau.

Now in those days in our Quebec

Nigh all the folk were pious,  
And when they saw his one black eye,  
With the blue one on the bias,  
They cross'd themselves, and wish'd the rogue  
Had drown'd 'tween there and Paris.

Yet money is made in the fur-trade,  
When others hunt the fur,  
And some thought best that they should test  
This lank adventurer ;  
And so they offer'd to subscribe

Enough to outfit and equip  
Jacques Valbeau for a hunting trip  
With some of the Huron tribe.  
Thus did he go, this Jacques Valbeau,  
And for many days he studied the ways  
And the words of the Huron tribe.

IV.

Yes ; money is made in the fur-trade  
When others hunt the fur,  
But brandy to the Indians  
If you want the best of fur,  
And everything else they have to show ;  
'Tis a law you know, and Jacques Valbeau  
Was its discoverer.  
So for many days he studied the ways  
And words of every tribe.  
Of money had he not a sou markee,  
But he carried a bottled bribe, [some,  
And the Moon turn'd round, and he prosper'd  
With beaver-skins and such,  
That he got for his brandy, and then for rum,  
And the gin of the heretic Dutch.  
But me it would take too long to describe  
How things went bad in every tribe  
Which the Church had held in check ;  
But sure there was trouble plenty too much  
In our dear old Quebec.  
So the Bishop and the Governor,

Who sometimes did agree,  
They met and talk'd the matter o'er,  
    And settled finally  
That they would have this Jacques Valbeau  
    And hang him by the neck  
Up on the windy citadel  
    Of our dear old Quebec.  
But so it is, and so it is,  
    And one can never tell,  
For in the Garden Ursuline  
That evil-eyed Valbeau had seen  
An Indian girl turned seventeen,  
    A sweet young sauvagesse,  
Left with the Lady Prioress  
To learn to sew, and cook nice food,  
And tell her beads, and to confess,  
    And otherwise be good.  
But Jacques Valbeau, that Jacques Valbeau,  
    He signall'd her so well  
In forest ways she understood,  
    That just at vesper-bell  
Of that same evening long ago  
She slipt away into the wood :—  
    O wicked Jacques Valbeau !

V.

So Jacques took to the wilderness,  
    The first coureur-de-bois,  
And with him went that Indian girl,

Whose convent-name was Lottilà—  
With the accent on the “aw.”  
I have heard her other name, but now  
I will not try to tell it,  
Because I can’t, and ’cause there are  
No letters that will spell it.  
But oh ’twas the good, good time they had  
Thro’ the woods in the summer weather !  
Hunting and fishing and trading in furs,  
And they were so rich together,  
Until one night as they lay asleep,  
Where the moss was growing thick and deep,  
'Gainst the trunk of a fallen tree,  
The Iroquois Indians silently  
Began to creep and creep  
In a closing circle where they lay,  
Till scarce they were more than three yards away.  
Then a twig did snap with a warning crack ;  
Upsprang that valiant rover, Jacques,  
All in an instant wide awake,  
And three of those Iroquois heads did break  
Before they had him down. Alack !  
They tied his hands behind his back  
And fixt him to a stake ;  
And his bottles of Jamaica rum  
They drank till they were drunk.  
And while the squaws began to plunk  
With rattly sticks on the big tum-tum  
(That’s a sort of Indian drum),

The braves did time and music make  
With yells and grunts and squawks,  
And danced around him at that stake,  
With painted cheek and horrible head,  
And pine-knot torches burning red,  
And ugly tomahawks ;  
And told him how his scalp they'd take,  
And otherwise keep him awake  
Until the blessed day should break,  
Then cut him into blocks,  
And finally his body bake,  
When sure that it no more could ache,  
And eat his heart when he was dead.  
Of these details, perhaps, I've said  
Too much—the subject shocks.

VI.

But so it is, and so it is,  
And one can never tell ;  
For on Valbeau the flesh did sizz,  
And he began to yell,  
When the Devil, moving mightily  
Somewhere down in Hell,  
Did cause a terrible earthquake,  
And all of Canada did shake  
From Ottawa to Rimouski.  
(This happen'd in sixteen sixty-three,  
And it's all set out in history.)  
But Jacques Valbeau stood swarthily,

And desperatē at the stake,  
And called the Devil to his aid,  
While all the Indians, dismay'd,  
Took to their naked knees and pray'd,  
And the ground kept heaving heavily.  
Yes, all took to their knees and pray'd,  
But Lottilà, the little squaw,  
Who, with no thought but her lover's life,  
Cut thro' his thongs with a scalping-knife,  
While the ground kept heaving heavily.  
And then was that great bargain made  
As Jacques Vilbeau stood swarthily ;  
He call'd the Devil to his aid,  
And the Devil, moving mightily

Somewhere down in Hell,  
Roar'd reply, so I am told,  
That Jacques Valbeau, the overbold,  
And Lottilà as well,  
If they would do his will alway,  
Should laugh at Time and never grow old,  
And none should hinder them or check,  
Whether at work or whether at play,  
Free to come and free to go  
Thro' all the Province of Quebec  
And the borders of Ontario—  
Down to the Judgment Day !

VII.

Then Jacques Valbeau and Lottilà,  
So the Iroquois declare  
(And I have cause to think 'tis true),  
While others crouch'd all in despair,  
Follow'd a ball of fire that ran  
Down to the river near St. Anne,  
Till it stopt by a big canoe ;  
And Lottilà she fainted there,  
And fell in that big canoe,  
And Jacques, half dead, he fell there too.  
Then it rose of itself in the spectral air,  
And far out of sight it flew.  
How long it was they never knew,  
It may have been days, but Jacques came to,  
And found they were still in the big canoe,  
Hovering over a landscape fair,  
Late in the afternoon.  
And it floated aimless, here and there,  
But Jacques Valbeau had ready wit,  
And he sat and consider'd the matter a bit,  
Till with a paddle soon  
He caught the trick of sailing it,  
Slowly at first and cautiously,  
But at last he sail'd as joyously  
As any bird on the wing ;  
While Lottilà woke up to sing  
To the end of the afternoon.  
Then a down-worn mountain they did see,

From whose green covering  
The granite ribs sagg'd outwardly ;  
It seem'd some monstrous ancient thing  
Crouching wearily.  
But on its summit they did light,  
And make their camp there for the night ;  
In later days, upon that site,  
    But lower down the hill,  
Jacques built a cabin large and strong,  
And near to it a whiskey-still  
    To make the whiskey-blanc.  
And more I'd like to tell to you  
Of how he did the Devil's will  
    In that bewitch'd canoe,  
But the tale of it would be too long,  
    O much too long, indeed !  
Yet in parish-records you may read  
How, with a drunken shanty-crew,  
They saw him pass in that canoe,  
Piercing the clouds with awful speed,—  
    Let that be a lesson to you !

#### VIII.

So thus that August afternoon,  
    Among those haunted hills,  
I met that young bedevil'd squaw,  
The luring, lissome Lottilà,  
    Minding her whiskey-stills.  
And truly I was glad I met her,

Yet I am shy, and sometimes nervous,  
And I wonder'd what excuse would serve us  
    To know each other better ;  
But lifting my hat to the brown young maid,  
She smiled straight at me, unafraid,  
    And presently began  
To speak with pretty words that ran  
Thro' English, French and Indian,—

    It was a lovely jargon ;  
But she said no word of Jacques Valbeau,  
Who with the Devil, long ago,  
    Made such a splendid bargain ;  
    So how was I to know ?

Now it's sometimes sweet to be indiscreet,  
As for me I am never wise ;  
So we sat us down on the warm, dry sod,  
'Mid brown grass and golden rod,  
    Watching the butterflies.

And she talk'd and talk'd, as I held her hand,  
And when I could not understand  
I look'd down deep into her eyes.

    Perhaps the thing sounds silly,  
But think of the picture that she made,  
    Array'd like a tiger-lily :

    Her body brown and quivering  
In that revealing petticoat,  
With catamount-claws at her fine throat  
    Fixt on a catgut string ;  
And the copper beads and color'd quills,

Just that and her dainty mocassins,—  
O she was the dreamliest thing !  
And I met her, for my sins,  
Somewhere back of Ottawa,  
Among the oldest hills.

IX.

The sun was slipping down the sky,  
Close to the green horizon,  
When sudden I saw the fairest sight  
That ever I set my eyes on :  
A yellow canoe, with three of a crew,  
Almost too fast to follow,  
Straight out of the sky to the hilltop nigh,  
Came skimming along like a swallow,  
And then to the cabin, right below,  
It slid with a motion easy and slow,  
And a man stept out—already you know  
'Twas Jacques Valbeau—'twas Jacques Valbeau !  
Gaunt he was like an eagle,  
With an evil eagle glance ;  
His black eye look'd me through and through,  
And his blue one leer'd askance ;  
The front of his head had been tomahaw'd,  
But part way down his back  
His hair was flowing coarse and black,  
Like the tail of a horse that is dockt ;  
But he had a very engaging smile,  
And I liked the way that he talked.

He was straight as an arrow when he walk'd,  
And, after a little while,  
I thought him a handsome man—almost,  
And really quite a delightful host.  
He introduced the other two  
Who rode with him in the big canoe.  
One was a fat little country girl,  
With carroty hair in a tosell'd curl,  
Her dolly eyes had tears at the rim,  
And her face was pale as milk that is skim,  
And she was a sad little girl.  
The other guest was a shantyman,  
Half drunk by the looks of him ;  
But the shantyman was an Irishman,  
And that is enough for him.  
Then Lottilà and the country girl  
Left us and went to the upper  
Cabin above the whiskey-still,  
To set the table for supper,  
While we sat down in the red sunlight,  
And listened to Jacques Valbeau  
As he told prodigious stories  
Of two hundred years ago,  
Of all the old coureurs-de-bois  
Dead so long ago,—  
We still there in the red sunlight,  
And they all underground.  
Then I heard a sound, and I look'd around,  
Then up where Lottilà

Was ringing a queer little oblong bell—  
(Maybe 'twas just a cowbell,  
Tho' I think 'twas silver, so clear and sweet  
The silver tone of it fell)—  
And gladly we follow'd Valbeau to the upper  
Cabin where we were to have our supper.  
For me, I was more than ready to eat,  
And the supper was a dream.  
We'd buttermilk and new potat,  
And a roasted chicken, great and fat,  
With cauliflower in cream,  
And a glass or two of whiskey-blanc,  
Just to help the meal along,  
And another glass, and after that  
Tabac de habitant.

X.

Upon my soul, I never knew  
Just when we enter'd the big canoe,  
The same as one can never keep  
The moment clear one falls asleep.  
But so it was until I found  
We were no more upon the ground.  
Now I at times am extremely nervous,  
As I said before, and when I found  
How that bewitch'd canoe did swerve us  
Up and away from the solid ground,  
With the hills a-sinking all around,  
And we once more in the copper glim

Of the Sun we lost somewhat before,  
Oh then, indeed, I thought small blame  
To the frighten'd girl with the tosell'd curl,  
And dolly eyes with tears at the rim,  
And face all pale as milk that is skim—

I'll bet that my own was the same !  
But the shantyman was too drunk, I think,  
To know where we were—it's a beastly shame  
The way those Irish drink.

XI.

Now remember aviation  
Differs quite from navigation,  
For always in the water  
Of the river that you ride in,  
Or be it smooth or rippy,  
A canoe is very tippy,  
And steadily you kneel.  
But through the air you glide in  
A fashion that you feel  
It's a medium to confide in,  
And you needn't keep a keel,—  
That much I saw at a glance.  
And tho' I'm not sufficiently wise  
To make it clear, you can't capsize  
So long as you properly balance,  
Or rise by levitation.  
Now, that's why aviation  
Differs quite from navigation,

And I had begun to feel easy again,  
And ready to take a chance,  
When all of a sudden it started to rain  
Right over our heads, and there was a growl  
Of thunder far down in the West.  
Then the Sun went out, and the wind 'gan howl,  
And a storm came bounding along on the crest  
Of the massy clouds, grown sulphurous,  
And there was the blue zig-zag and flash  
Of lightning, follow'd by instant crash  
Of the thunder nearing us.  
With that Valbeau began to sing,  
While Lottilà did sway and swing  
Her brown arms perilous :  
*Gai faluron failurette,*  
*Gai faluron dondé !*  
I did the same but tremblingly,  
And the Indian girl did grin with glee  
To see how the white girl shrunk, [knee,  
With her face in her hands and her head on my  
But the shantyman still lay drunk,  
So how could I put her away ?  
It was all so characteristic !  
*Gai faluron failurette,*  
*Gai faluron dondé !*  
Now, it's all very fine to sing that way  
When everything else is right,  
But we sailed straight into a loaded cloud,  
So villainous anarchistic

It bang'd like tons of dynamite :—  
For a time I was blind with the awful light,  
    And deaf with the awful roar ;  
I felt we were blown clean out of sight,  
    And then I felt we had sunk  
To the bottomless pit for evermore ;  
    But the shantyman still lay drunk.  
It makes me shiver to think of it now,  
But after a bit I rallied somehow.  
Valbeau was laughing at the bow,  
    And he bent far back to speak :  
“ Holà, monsieur ; comment ça va ? ”  
To keep my face with Lottilà,  
    I managed just to stammer :  
“ Bully, Valbeau—c'est magnifique !  
    But go where the clouds are calmer ! ”

## XII.

We were up in a cool, sweet air,  
    Under a wonderful sky,  
Velvety dark and richly sown  
    With wonderful stars from zone to zone,  
    And all of them seem'd so nigh,  
But a little more, and we would play  
    Near the opal arch of the Milky Way,  
    With the yellow Moon near by.  
Then over the rim we look'd far down  
    Where the World had vanish'd in ire,  
Where fold on fold of the black clouds roll'd,

Roaring and fearful with fire,  
And we rose from that Devil's crucible,  
Like souls that are rising released from Hell,  
To regions of glory and gold.  
Higher and higher and higher !  
And the air grew thin and cold :  
But higher and higher and higher  
I urged Valbeau to explore  
Nearer and nearer that border of gold  
And limit where mortals expire :  
Higher and higher and higher !  
While a million millions miles to the fore,  
I watch'd the glint of a jewell'd door  
In the Gardens of Desire :  
Higher and higher and higher !  
Till I was dazed and my breath was gone,  
And I could see no more.

### XIII.

When I came to myself we were sailing down,  
And circling like a feather  
In a slow descending spiral flight  
Thro' mellow moonlit weather :  
And the country girl croon'd with delight,  
And claspt her hands together.  
But still her head droop'd on my knee  
As she claspt her hands together,  
And so close were we that none could see  
As I fool'd with a carroty curl :

Alas ! I admit my conduct was raw,  
For my heart was all to Lottillà,

But I kissed the other girl.

Now it's a great mistake, when up in the skies,

To kiss the other girl,

Just for a pair of dolly eyes,

Or a cute little carroty curl :

Yet not the slightest harm was meant,

With me it's a matter of temperament ;

But the shantyman woke up !

Oh, blast that Irish pup !

He woke and caught us in the act,

Just at the moment our lips had smackt,

And he went for me, hell-bent ;

Let out from his ugly throat a yell,

Told Lottillà just what he saw,

And—before I had time to explain,

Or argue against the fact—

That fact so apparently plain—

They both made at me so savage I fell

Without a chance to prepare !

And I fell, and I fell, and I fell—my Lord !

It's the awfulest feel to fall overboard

From a canoe away up in the air ;

It's really too swift to describe or tell,

But first you feel you're out of it,

And then you feel a thump,

And after that you're generally

A most unlovely lump.

But in my case 'twas different,

My body was caught by a wind-current,

And it drove me sideways on,  
With a muffled whack, 'gainst a big haystack,  
And I tumbled it over and lay on my back  
    Unconscious till the dawn,  
    And so flat, flat, flat,  
That when I arose in misery,  
    A long time after that,  
'Twas hard to remember where I was at,  
    And I sigh'd lugubriously,  
With my body so stiff and my head so sore,  
It couldn't have hurt me any more  
If I'd been out all night on a spree—

Gee !

XIV.

Now let me end, O bulbous friend !  
    This rime ere I begin to  
Tell other things irrelevant  
Of venturings extravagant  
    And mystery and sin too :  
For I've had my time in every clime  
    The Lord has led me into :—  
But give me August, after all,  
If I be free to roam and loll  
Among those tiger-lily hills  
    Back of Ottawa.  
I am ready to risk whatever befal  
To meet once more that little squaw,  
The luring lissome Lotillà,  
    Minding her whiskey-stills ;  
To listen again to her pretty patois,

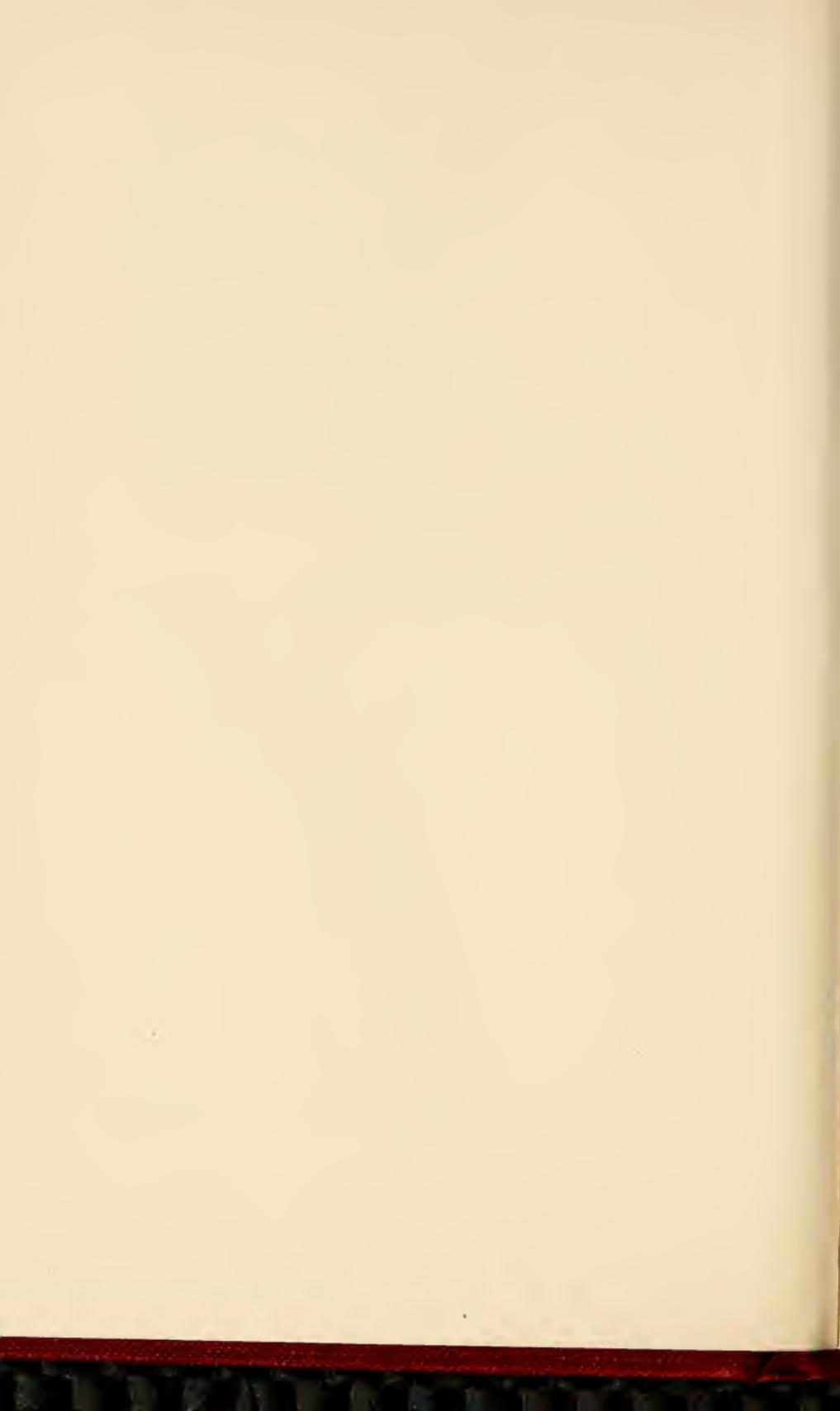
And hold her hand and hear her sing  
Among those tiger-lily hills,  
For she was the dreamliest thing !

*Gai faluron failurette,—*

I think I hear her yet,  
Out there, in her buckskin petticoat,  
With catamount-claws at her fine throat,  
Fixt on a catgut string ;  
And the copper beads and color'd quills,  
And dainty mocassins,—  
The girl who met me, for my sins,  
Somewhere back of Ottawa,  
The wanton town of Ottawa,  
Among the oldest hills.

*Gai faluron failurette,*

*Gai faluron dondè !*



ON BEACON HILL,

BRITISH COLUMBIA

I.

Prone on a grassy knoll where runs the sea  
In from the North Pacific, deep and blue,  
Whose tide-ript waters many a century  
But parted for the painted war-canoe,  
Till Juan de Fuca and his swarthy crew  
Sail'd on a treasure cruise to regions cold,  
Idle I dream'd a summer evening through,  
Watching the ruddy Western Sun enfold  
The snowy-peak'd Olympians in transient gold.

II.

Our air hath yet some tang of Spanish days,  
Some glow of stories fading from the past  
Of pioneers, and wreckt and curious strays  
From distant lands along this coast up-cast,  
Since brave Vancouver, from his eager mast,  
Beheld the island of his lasting fame,  
And, veering to its pleasant shore, made fast  
To raise our flag in George's royal name,  
While group'd around his brawny tars gave loud acclaim.

III.

Across the rocky harbor-mouth still fall  
Echoes to tell of England's easy crown,  
And timely bugles from the barracks call  
A challenge to the careless little town

That lies like a pretty maid in tatter'd gown  
'Mid tangled gardens, tempting one to halt  
Where gnarled oaks, with ivy overgrown,  
Are all accord with her one charming fault—  
So drowsy nigh the hidden guns of Esquimalt.

IV.

And nonchalant lay I that afternoon,  
The air a scent of wild white-clover bore,  
And I could hear the tumult and the tune  
Of tumbling waves along the pebbled shore ;  
Such gipsy joys to me were even more  
Than chase of gold or fame ; but yet withal  
I felt the first fine tremor o'er and o'er  
Of some vast traffic without interval  
To traverse soon these waterways imperial.

V.

Where now some tug-boat leaves a smoky trail  
To pencil on the air a coiling blot  
Athwart the lighthouse, or the infrequent sail  
Of some slow lumber-bark, or vagrant yacht,—  
Where glides some British cruiser, grimly wrought,  
Beside the schooners from the Arctic seas,—  
To largely feed the crowded world methought  
Here soon shall pass great annual argosies  
Full-freighted with the yield of prairie granaries.

VI.

And musing thus upon that gentle mound,  
Far down the reach of waters to the right

I saw an Empress liner inward bound,  
Speeding thro' the Narrows, trim and white,  
And every moment growing on my sight,  
Like something clear unfolding in a dream ;  
Her very motion was a clean delight,  
That woke the sapphire sea to curl and cream  
Smoothly off her curving prow and snowy beam.

VII.

And easily as up the Straits she roll'd,  
My fancy rambled over her to see,  
Bulging richly 'gainst her steely hold,  
Bales of flossy silk stow'd solidly  
With matted rice and tons of fragrant tea ;  
Or else, her quainter cargo fain to scan,  
Wee China toys in silver filagree,  
And cunning ivories of old Japan,  
Pack'd with iris-woven rugs from Ispahan.

VIII.

All hail to her ! the white forerunner sent  
From out the lavish West to rouse the old  
Lethargic portals of the Orient,  
Till all its stolid inhabitants be told  
Of quick new modes of life, and manifold  
Swift engines of exchange, and how by these  
To run their times within a finer mould,  
And from the rut of Chinese centuries  
To reach for wider joys and soother luxuries.

## IX

O sure it is no small thing to be said  
 That under us the East and West have met !  
 And our red route shall yet be perfected  
 Around the World, and our old flag shall yet  
 Much vantage o'er its younger rivals get,  
 Whether it wave from Windsor's kingly pile,  
 Or on the fartherst verge of Empire set,  
 'Bove fearless towns, whose heart-strings all the while  
 Shall thrill to every chord from their old Mother-isle

## X.

We feel the centre now, where'er we stand,  
 And touch community in everything,  
 Since Science, with her patient, subtle hand,  
 Hath snar'd the Globe as in a witch's ring,  
 And set all elements a-quivering  
 To our desire. What marvels more she'll show—  
 What new delights from Nature conjuring—  
 Small wit have I to guess, but this I know,  
 That more and more the scattered World as one must grow.

## XI.

Then closer blend for empire—that is power :  
 No thing of worth e'er came of feebleness,  
 And union is the genius of the hour.  
 The virtues that by master-craft and stress  
 Wrought hugely on primeval palaces,  
 And 'stonish'd Egypt and great Babylon  
 With monuments of admirable excess,

Seem once again from out Oblivion drawn  
To lighten o'er the Earth in unexampl'd dawn.

XII.

We front the threshold of a giant age,  
Foremost still, but others follow fast ;  
We may not trust o'ermuch the written page,  
Or measure with the measures of the past.  
For all our millions, and our regions vast,  
And arm'd array, in boastful numbers told,  
To keep the treasures that our sires amass'd,  
Hath need of statesmen lion-like to hold,  
And still forestall the changing times, alert and bold.

XIII.

The impulse of a thousand centuries  
Strikes upward now in our united race,  
Not for a Roman triumph, but to ease  
The intercourse of nations, and to place  
The social fabric on a happier base ;  
The very enginry of war abhor'd,  
So soon as may, is bended to erase  
The stain and bloody ravage of the sword ;  
The vanquish'd now are all to equal right restor'd.

XIV.

But cry contempt upon that sickly creed  
That would not fire a shot to save its own,  
Whose piety perverse doth only feed  
The hope of leaner nations, bolder grown,  
To tread the path that we have hewn alone :

'Twas not for them we found that path so hard—  
'Twas not for them the Earth so thick was sown  
With British dead ! Nay, rather let us guard  
The barest rock that flies our flag at all hazard.

XV.

And e'en for the sake of rich and plenteous peace,  
Let mastery in arms be honor'd still !  
So only shall the fear of foemen cease.  
For this is naked truth, say what they will,  
That when a people lose the power to kill  
They count for naught among the sons of men ;  
Nor tongue, nor pen, nor art, nor workmen's skill  
Can save their homes from alien ravish then,  
Or lift their fallen capitols to place again.

XVI.

Then give us rifles—rifles everywhere—  
Ready rifles, tipt with bayonets !  
And men of iron to lead, who little care  
For parlor tactics or for social sets ;  
Red captains worthy of their epaulets ;  
Not rich men's sons to make a passing show,  
Lace-loving fops or wooden martinets,  
But clear-eyed stalwarts o'er the ranks, who know  
How best to train a naval gun or trap a foe.

XVII.

And tho' the burden and the fret of life  
Still wear upon us with unequal weight,  
We'll ne'er give way to fratricidal strife.

We are a people strong to tolerate,  
Till form'd opinion tranquilly abate  
The jagg'd abuses of an earlier age,  
Rather than, impatient, emulate  
Those hapless nations that in sudden rage  
Of revolution wreck their ancient heritage.

XVIII.

Our Saxon temper, that 'gainst Church and Crown,  
And tyrant Castles of the feudal plan,  
Made steady way until it wore them down,  
And straiten'd all their maxims till they ran  
Current for the right of every man  
Freely to change his state and circumstance,  
Is virile yet unbrokenly to span  
What gulf ahead, what unforeseen mischance,  
Would threat the front of our magnificent advance.

XIX.

And we have those whose dreams of betterment  
Outrun their fleeting day ; whose hearts ideal  
Beat evermore against discouragement,  
In high endeavor not to cease till all  
The bars to opportunity shall fall  
Within the Union of the British bred ;  
Nor rest content until the mutual  
Machinery of State be perfected,  
So that no least of all our brethren go unfed.

XX.

I never saw Britannia carved in stone,  
Or figured out in bronze, but loyally

I've thought what merit shall be all her own  
In that great Brotherhood that's yet to be—  
The diamond Empire of Futurity—  
Whose equal citizens, all thron'd elate,  
And treading each a sovran destiny,  
Shall count it yet their pride and best estate  
To steadily for commonwealth co-operate.

XXI.

Who'd be the bard of that triumphant time?  
Who hath the pen of promise, and the skill,  
To tell its periods in exultant rhyme?  
For I am but a dreamer on a hill,  
And prone withal fantastic hours to fill  
With fancies running wild of thought, or gloat  
Eerie on the rising Moon, until  
Betimes I hear her dim harmonic note—  
Boding of forbidden things and themes remote.

XXII.

But so a passing ship—a bugle call—  
Did tempt me to essay a song of State  
Beyond the range of my poor art, as all  
You rank'd Olympians, that loom serrate  
Against the azure upper air, are great  
O'er this low hill. To them young Morning throws  
His golden first largesse—there, lingering late,  
Rose-mantled Eve her deep allegiance shows,  
Glorious 'mid unconquer'd peaks and virgin snows.

## THE CHILCOOT PASS

### I.

Far up the Chilcoot Heights ! The solid snow,  
Avalanch'd from Titan peaks that rise  
In stony isolation 'gainst the skies,  
Hath whelm'd all in soundless overthrow ;  
And almost now the white and crusted mass  
Hath choked the glacier's ghastly blue crevasse  
That cleaves to everlasting cold below :  
The wintry day declines ; and down the Pass,  
Where Time hath fallen, desolate, asleep,  
To mark the flight of Arctic hours gigantic shadows creep.

### II.

But see ! Upon that perilous meagre trail,  
There winding upward to a dazzling crest,  
A miner inward-bound on Fortune's quest !  
And tho' the sunlight's slanting weak and pale,  
Tho' in the livid clouds a tempest lours,  
And far above him yet the Summit towers,  
He sees therein no sight to make him quail ;—  
'Gainst any steep he'd pit his stubborn powers ;  
He goes, as dauntless men have gone of old,  
To play with Death in a land unknown for a stake of love  
and gold.

### III.

Steady he's toil'd for hours ; at last he makes  
A moment's pause to shift his heavy pack,

The twisted straps chafe sore upon his back,  
And with hard travel all his body aches.  
But now it is he notes with some dismay  
What little measure's left him of the day,  
And how the air's ablur with thin white flakes ;  
Yet up the Pass he takes one quick survey,  
Then grimly on he goes with hastening stride,  
For he must be over the Summit by night—he will sleep on  
the other side.

IV.

Let others lag ; he'll on with the first of the rush !  
Down rivers roaring into deserts bleak,  
He'll pioneer his way to the richest creek—  
He'll cut and thaw the frozen earth—he'll crush  
Its hoarded treasure out—and he'll call his claim  
“ The Little Annie ! ” For him that simple name  
Lights up a dream of home returning flush  
With store of yellow gold and golden fame ;  
Bringing back the happy days once more  
To a little girl left lonely on the lone Lake Erie shore.

V.

The gloom is deepening where the sunlight was ;  
The flakes are falling faster now around ;  
Far off he hears a shrill, foreboding sound,  
And at its challenge makes another pause.  
Awhile irresolute, with anxious eye  
He gazes at the menace of the sky,  
And from its hue reluctant warning draws :

The storm is nigh—he little dreams how nigh—  
When cursing his labor lost he turns to go  
Down again for shelter to the cabin far below.

VI.

Save your curses, man ! You walk o'erbold !  
You go too slow and sullen down that path !  
You may live and brave the coming wrath  
In those tumultuous clouds above you roll'd !  
Save your curses, man !—for now you'll need  
Every breath your body has for speed ;  
E'en now the air is struck with deathlier cold ;  
E'en now the foremost furious winds are freed ;  
Look !—look above you there at last,  
And see the Heavens whirling downward, vague and white  
and vast !

VII.

So—he knows !—too late, alas, he knows  
His fierce pursuers, and with desperate leap  
Goes plunging madly down the uncertain steep—  
Down for his life ! Frantic now, he throws  
His dragging pack away—his senses swim  
With swift descent—the storm's o'ertaking him—  
The drift in stinging clouds around him blows  
To make him gasp and choke—his eyes grow dim—  
Unto his very bones the cold he feels ;—  
But down and down that fatal Pass, tho' dazed he leaps  
and reels !

VIII.

Far up the Chilcoot Heights ! The storm is on :  
He's struggling still, but now he's lost the trail,  
And all his sturdy muscles flag and fail,  
'Mid swirling snow, to shapes fantastic drawn  
That pass like endless fleeing ghosts ; and each,  
In passing, seems to hiss at him and reach  
Long throttling fingers out ; sight is gone,  
For his eyes see only white ; hark ! the screech  
Of Artic winds swift leaping from the sky  
Down like the souls of famish'd wolves—" Oh Annie, lass !  
—good-bye !

IX.

" For now I'm play'd right out—I'm freezing fast—  
I'm on the spot where I'll forever lie,  
Just when I thought my chance had come—good-bye !  
Good-bye ! my life is over now and past !  
And it's been no use, tho' I've tried everywhere  
To do the best I could, and do it square,  
God's kept his grudge against me to the last,  
And I've stood it now so long, I hardly care !  
Let Him finish me up, right here, if he likes, and hurl  
What's left of me to Hell !—But you !—O Annie—my  
orphan girl ! "

X.

White, white, white—all 'round 'tis white—  
Blind white and cold ;—unheard is hurl'd  
His last appeal 'gainst this relentless World :

No rescue now may come—no swift respite :  
The minutes of his life are almost o'er.  
He knows it well ;—see, he moves no more !  
Body and soul can make no further fight,  
Bewilder'd in the blizzard's maddening roar ;  
But he's facing it—he's standing rigid there—  
Defying Heaven's utmost wrath in reason-rack'd despair !

XI.

“ Blow, then, damn you—blow ! You've taken all !  
You—whatever Thing you are that hears—  
You've never once let up on me for years !  
You've stript me stark and bare as a wooden doll !  
And there's not a rag of comfort left ! You've blown  
Every joy and every hope I've known  
Roughly from my life ! And when I fall,  
You'll howl above me, dying here alone !  
Pile on—pile on, with your blasted, strangling snow !  
You can take no more but my life now ! Blow ! God damn  
you—blow !”

XII.

White, white, white,—unceasing white !  
See ! he totters, yielding to his doom—  
The snow hath ready made his shroud and tomb :  
But what is that ? There breaks a sudden light  
That startles him to last delirious cries ;—  
Pinnacled athwart the awful skies,  
Behold a treasure-lode, uncovered bright  
In transient glory to his dying eyes !

On a towering peak the sunset clouds unroll'd,  
And he's gasping at the cruel splendor—"Gold—gold—  
gold!"

XIII.

Far up the Chilcoot Heights ! A prostrate form,  
Half-buried now and motionless, doth lie  
All free of pain—and, happily, to die.  
Listen ! He's muttering thro' the passing storm :  
"Home again, Annie—home again !  
God ! but it's restful—after that rattling train !  
It's all so still and sunny here—and so warm !  
How was it I came so soon ? I can't explain—  
Only I know I'm home ; and oh ! it seems  
Too good to be true ! Doesn't it, lass ? And it's finer than  
all my dreams !

XIV.

"You've grown so pretty since I've been away—  
So tall and pretty—I almost seem to see  
Your mother smiling there again at me,  
Just like she look'd upon her wedding-day !—  
A year before they laid her 'neath the grass,  
And left me only you, my little lass !  
Come closer to me—things grow dull and gray ;—  
My eyes were hurt in a blizzard on the Pass  
The year I went away and left you, Pet !  
What's making it dark so early, Annie ? Surely it's not  
night yet ?

## XV.

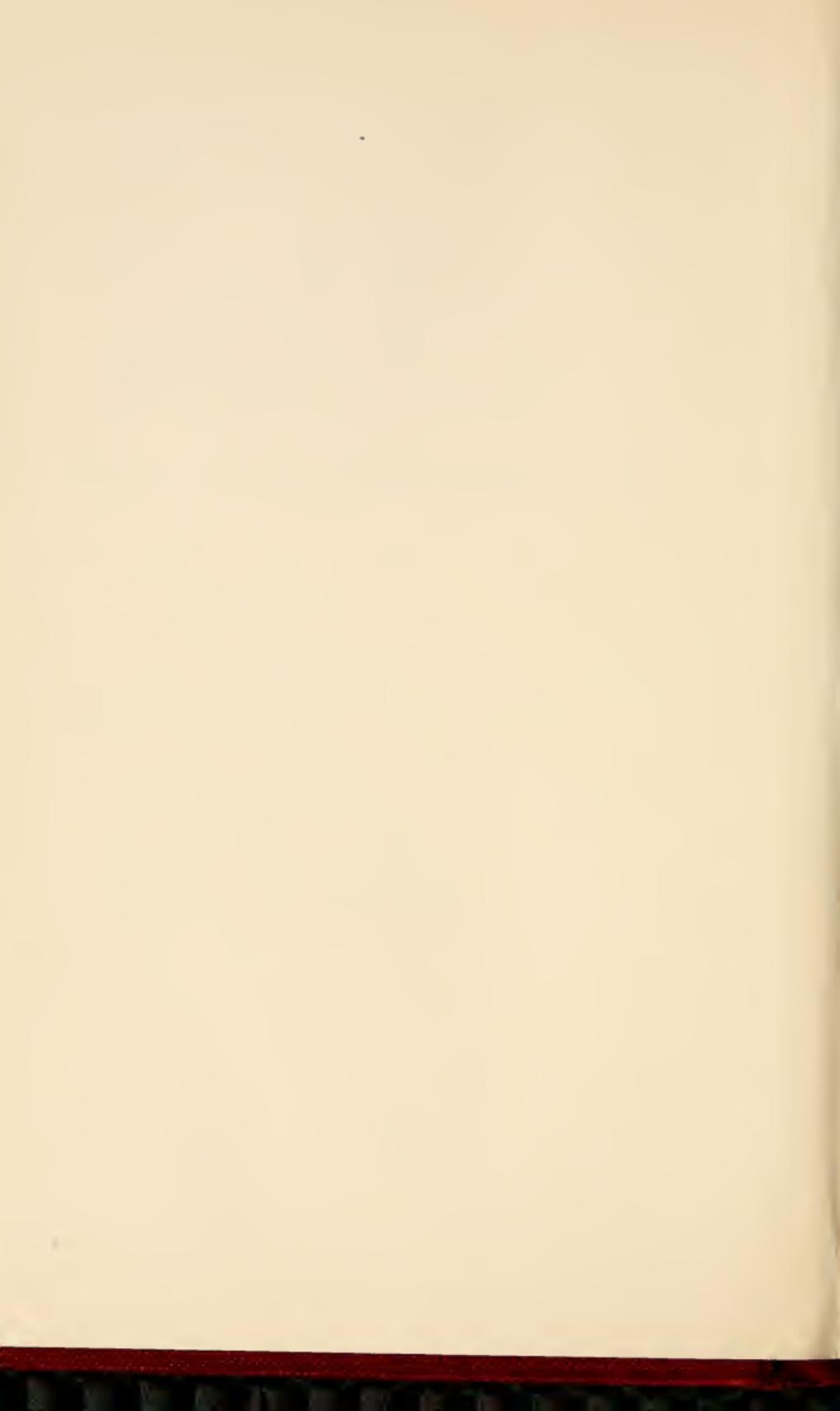
“ Oh ! well—no matter ! Whatever time it be,  
 I am one of the lucky ones, I’ve made my pile,  
 And I’m going to take it easy for awhile.  
 No more work or worry now for me ;  
 I’ve lots of gold—as yellow as your curls ;  
 And I’ll dress you fine again like the other girls,  
 And get you everything you want—you’ll see !  
 A ring like mother had—and a collar of pearls ;—  
 And I’ll buy—I’ll buy the old home back—that  
 they sold !

But it’s made your daddy old, dear—it’s made him feel  
 so old !

## XVI.

“ Yes, I hear you laughing at me now !  
 But oh ! it’s good to hear you laugh again !  
 To have you near and have you laugh—and then,  
 I must look kind of funny, I’ll allow ;  
 These clothes of mine are all so patch’d and queer !  
 But I’ll have better ones to-morrow, dear ;—  
 And I know you love your old dad, anyhow !  
 I feel so tired, I think I’ll sleep just here :—  
 Kiss me, Annie !—there—good night, my lass ! ”

God rest the souls of the dead who lie on the Heights of the  
 Chilcoot Pass !



## UNDERGROUND

### I.

ON a queer, queer journey  
I heard the queerest sound,—  
'Twas the Devil with a banjo  
In a cavern underground,  
Where the merry, merry skeletons  
Were waltzing round and round,  
While the clicking of their bones kept time.

### II.

Thro' a low, iron door,  
With a huge iron bar,  
A door perchance some careless  
Imp had left ajar,  
I crept behind a column cut  
All out of Iceland spar,  
And the carven angles twinkled frostily.

### III.

I was frighten'd of the Devil,  
And I wouldn't look at him,  
But I watch'd a thousand goblins  
From nook and cranny dim  
A-glowering on the skeletons,  
And every goblin grim  
And ugly as an old gargoyle.

IV.

And bogles play'd on fiddles  
    To help the banjo out,  
For 'twas nothing but the music  
    Kept alive that crazy rout ;  
But the big green toads could  
    Only hop about  
To the rumbling of the bass bassoon.

V.

Behind the Iceland column  
    I watch'd them on the sly,  
Above them arch'd the cavern  
    With its roof miles high,  
All ribb'd with blue rock-crystal, shining  
    Bluer than the sky,  
And studded with enormous stalactites.

VI.

But the lovely floor below,  
    With its level crystalline  
Splendid surface spreading  
    Radiantly green !—  
As if a lone, impearled lake  
    Of waters subterrene  
Had frozen to a flawless emerald !

VII.

And down, down, down,  
Its moveless depths were clear ;  
And down, down, down,  
In wonder I did peer  
At lost and lovely imagery  
Beneath me far and near,—  
Silent there and white forevermore.

VIII.

But from the sunken beauty  
Of that white imagery  
Lissome shadows loosen'd,  
Flame-like and fitfully,  
That form'd anon to spheres serene  
And mounted airily,  
And broke in golden bubbles thro' the floor.

IX.

There, bubble-like, they vanish'd  
Amid the whirling crew,  
Yet left a radiance trailing  
Slowly out of view,  
That sometimes o'er the skeletons  
Such carnal glamor threw,  
It flatter'd them to human shape again.

X.

How long I watch'd I know not ;  
The weird hours went on,  
Lost hours that bring the midnight  
No nearer to the dawn,  
When suddenly I felt a clutch,  
And swiftly I was drawn  
From out behind that carven block of spar.

XI.

My soul !—a skeleton !—  
A rattling little thing,  
Twined itself about me  
As close as it could cling !  
And in its arms with horror I  
Perforce 'gan circling,  
Compell'd by that fantastic orchestra.

XII.

Onward swept the waltzers  
To the wicked tunes they play'd,  
And soon we were amongst them,  
And my rattling partner sway'd  
When'er the golden bubbles broke,  
And trailing lights array'd  
Elusively around its naked bones.

XIII.

A minute or an hour,—  
Or maybe half a night,—  
No matter, for at last  
I was over all my fright,  
And the music rippled through me till  
I shivered with delight,  
Fascinated like the fat green toads.

XIV.

And by-and-by I noticed  
How 'mid that grisly swarm  
My clinging little partner  
'Gan strangely to transform,—  
I saw the bones as thro' a mist  
Of something pink and warm,  
That quiver'd and grew firm from top to toe.

XV.

Bright copper-color'd hair  
Soon round her head did curl,  
Her mouth grew sweet with tints  
Of coral and of pearl,  
And she looked on me with eyes that seem'd  
Of lambent chrysobery1,  
While her body fair as alabaster shone.

XVI.

A witch she was so lovely,  
To all else I was blind,  
And the Devil and the Goblins  
And the Rout we left behind,  
In our wild waltz whirling on  
The cool sweet wind  
Of the lone lorn caverns underground.

XVII.

Like rose-leaves strewn  
Upon a crystal tide,  
Like thistle-down blown  
By Zephyrs far and wide,  
We swept in aimless ecstasy,  
Silent side by side,  
Careening thro' those caverns underground.

XVIII.

A minute or an hour,—  
Or maybe half a night,—  
No way have I to measure  
The madness of that flight,  
For the loosen'd zone of witchery  
Made drunk with sheer delight,  
Till we sank in happy stupor to the floor.

XIX.

Nearby there was a grotto  
That open'd chapel-wise,  
As from a rich cathedral  
In sacrilegious guise ;  
On the high Masonic altar were  
Three crystal chalices,  
And they held the sweetest poisons Hell can brew.

XX.

One was a liquor golden  
That sparkled like the dew,  
One was a wine that trembled,  
And blood-red was its hue,  
But the last Lethean elixir  
Was dark as night, shot through  
With glimmerings of green and violet.

XXI.

Then rose the witch and mutter'd,  
" Quick, for the hour is late !  
Quick ere the music ceases  
And the locks of the dungeons grate  
O'er the host of haunted skeletons  
That here brief revel make !  
Come free me by this altar's alchemy ! "

XXII.

“ Drink thou the golden liquor  
That lights yon jewell’d rim,—  
That sparkles fair as sunshine  
On curls of seraphim !  
Drink for the love I gave thee !  
Or drink for a devil’s whim !  
But pledge me to the time that yet shall be ! ”

XXIII.

“ But the gloomy elixir  
Give me, that I may sleep  
With the white wraiths that slumber  
In the dim green deep !  
Where the silence of the under-world  
Shall wrap me round and keep  
My soul untouched by any dreams of day ! ”

XXIV.

I drank the cup of sunshine,  
She drank the cup of night,  
But the red we spill’d between us  
For sacrifice and plight  
Of passion that must centre in  
The sphereless Infinite  
Ere her sweet life shall mix with mine again.

XXV.

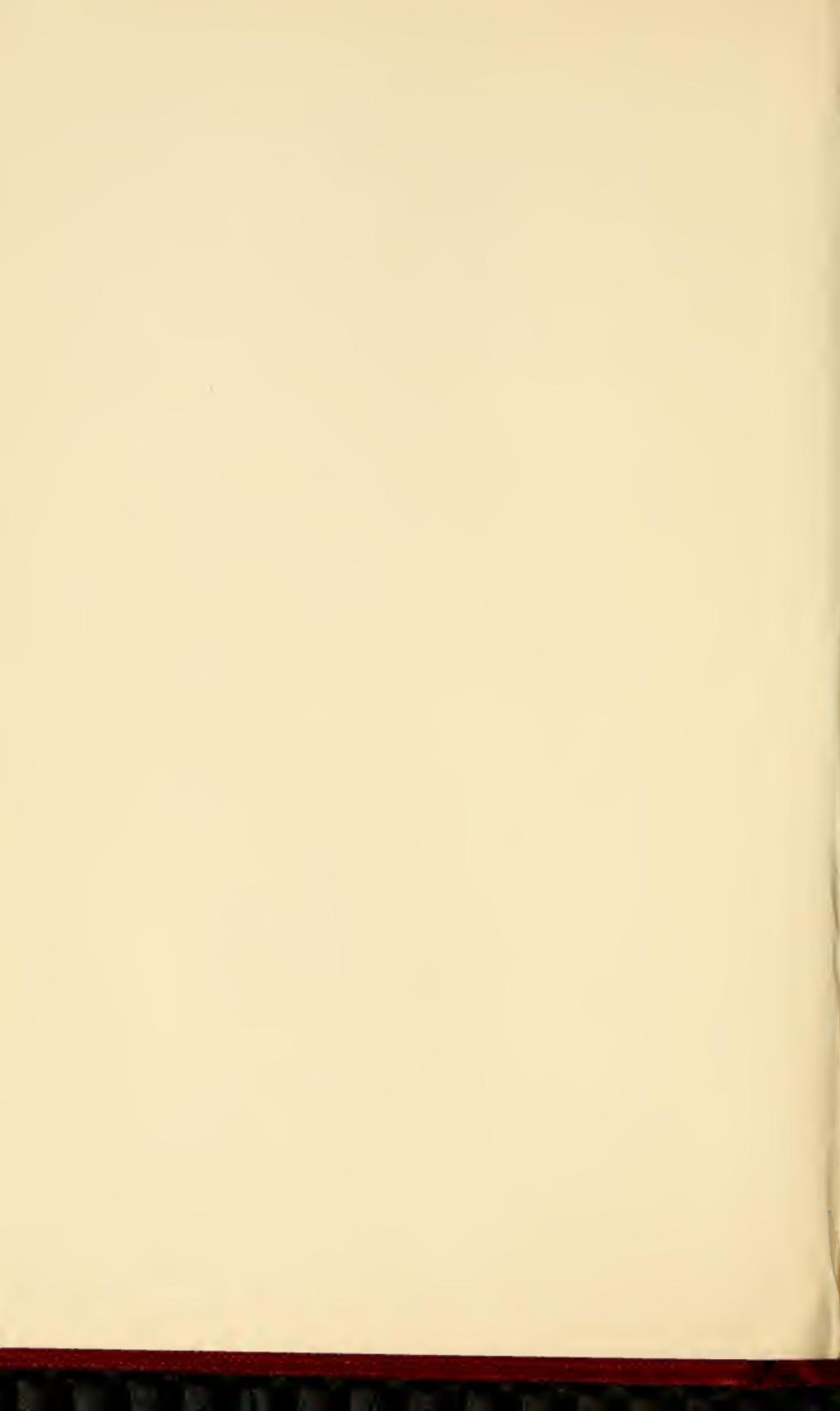
A moment all her beauty  
Was lighten'd as with fire,  
Her fair voluptuous body  
With its trailing, loose attire,  
And her eyes to mine did glow as in  
A sunset of desire,—  
Then prone she fell upon the chapel floor.

XXVI.

And the white flesh wasted from her  
As she was falling dead,  
Her very bones had crumbled,  
Ere one farewell I said,—  
From sight of that dire sorcery  
In wild dismay I fled,  
Seeking madly for the low iron door.

XXVII.

Behind the Iceland column  
I found it still ajar,—  
Thro' galleries of darkness  
I travell'd swift and far,  
Until I reach'd the upper-world  
And saw the morning star  
Paling o'er a meadow by the sea.



## THE MOONLIT WHEAT

### I.

O LOVE of mine ! amid the moonlit wheat  
Of harvest-fields how fair—how lily-sweet !  
I saw thee stand and signal me alone  
To that untrodden vale that was thine own  
On that last night of all that we did meet,—  
O love of mine amid the moonlit wheat !

### II.

No thing within that region was astir ;  
Entranc'd I saw it all as if it were  
The scenery of a dream wrought to express  
The longing of my heart, thy loveliness,  
And that unseen romance whose theatre  
Must be in regions where no thing's astir.

### III.

Quaint and low, like some remote bassoon,  
Across the marsh there came a muffled croon,  
And all alone one melancholy frog,  
Squat on the butt of a sunken cedar log,  
Solemnly did serenade the Moon :—  
In tone so low and quaint—like the quaint bassoon.

### IV.

While in an elm-tree an oriole  
Trill'd out a rural evensong that stole

In drowsy cadence from the upper air ;—

O Love of mine ! in Eden unaware

Some angel slept to let our spirits stroll,  
While o'er us sang that golden oriole.

V.

And far above the starlit skies unroll'd

A spell of silence, and of things untold,  
That seal'd our lips ; the warm ripe wheat, caress'd  
By Zephyrs scented from the sultry West,

Went rippling like a sea of pallid gold,—  
Under those starlit skies, so wide unroll'd.

VI.

But when I loos'd thy locks of yellow hair

To curl and shimmer in the cooling air,  
Past coy denial, and virginal disguise,  
I read the unutter'd secret in thine eyes  
Of all thou wouldest surrender to me there,—  
The while I loos'd thy locks of yellow hair.

VII.

And Time went by—and Time was naught to us :—

Only our wistful hearts grew tremulous  
To hear the Zephyrs in sweet union sigh,  
While slowly in the fulness of the sky

The lucent Moon herself sank amorous :—  
And Time went by—and Time was naught to us.

VIII.

Alas ! how now the serpent years unfold  
Sharp treacheries, and pangs unknown of old !  
Yet once to have had thee mine—once to have felt  
In thy caresses all my being melt  
To passion's last felicity,—I hold  
Worth every pang these serpent years unfold.

IX.

And oft I loose the gates of Memory  
To seek amid the uncertain scenery,  
O Love of mine ! some vision of thee, pale  
Within the silence of a moonlit vale [see,—  
Where none may follow, and where none may  
Beyond the darkling gates of Memory.

X.

I am thy lover still, O Love of mine !  
My heart shall never lose the fire of thine ;  
And tho' I bide in loneliness and pain,  
My soul shall hold her peace, and not complain,  
Trusting somehow, somewhere, these arms shall  
twine  
Round thy sweet self again, O Love of mine !

## THE JEWEL THAT CAME

### I.

ONCE an artless maiden,  
Fair and sweet,  
Knelt too low, they say,  
At an idol's feet,—  
Just the usual idol  
Made of the usual clay,  
That went to dust entirely  
In the usual way.

### II.

Alas and alas for a maiden  
Put to scorn !  
All soil'd with the dust of her idol,  
And left forlorn !  
But in the dust she found  
A jewel one day—  
A jewel of wondrous beauty,  
So they say.

### III.

Then she sang : “ Now little I care  
For the World so cruel ;—  
O what were the World to me  
Without my jewel !  
For this—ah this is the heart  
Of my idol of clay !  
And I'll keep it and love it forever—  
Whatever they say !

## IN A NORTHERN LANE

I RENE, I saw thee  
Once in the wane  
Of twilight in June  
In a Northern lane,  
Whose borders were bower'd  
In maples, and flower'd  
With lilacs new-open'd by rain.

Instant an ardor  
Too sweet to restrain,  
Too wildly entrancing  
For words to explain,  
Was born of that meeting,  
All silent, ungreeting,  
But thrilling my every vein.

Forlorn then I falter'd,  
I look'd on thee fain,  
As one who might venture  
Thy favor to gain  
There and then—only  
The charm of thy lonely  
Beauty bid me refrain.

Sylph of the Summer,  
In Summer's domain,  
That mortal like me

May never attain,  
As a star unabiding  
I follow'd thee—gliding  
By me in dainty disdain.

Now amorous Night  
In passion and pain  
Yields me thy vision  
Again and again—  
In dreams that enthrall me  
I follow and call thee—  
Irene, shall it all be in vain ?

## NOCTURNE

### I.

'TWAS in a garden of the rich  
Where all were guests to roam  
Down terraced lawns amid the gloam  
Of a night in June.

### II.

Gallants gay, with ladies dight  
In silk attire, were there ;  
But alien fine and debonaire  
Stood one alone.

### III.

And of that throng I knew not which  
Could claim such cousin fair ;—  
Akin she seem'd to the merest air  
Of a night in June.

### IV.

An orchid born of the young moonlight  
That trails thro' tropic bowers ;  
I found her 'mong those Northern flowers  
So all alone,

V.

Till our hostess, with a smile,  
Came and led me to  
That orchid-maid—and then all through  
That night in June

VI.

There came none other to my sight ;  
The orbéd orange glow  
Of lanterns lit a path to go  
Off alone

VII.

Where bronzed Mexicans the while  
On mandolins did play  
Love-tunes of Spain that seem'd to say  
That night in June :

VIII.

“ O Senorita of Delight !  
Lo, the hour of bliss !  
Lo, the years have bloomed for this—  
This alone !

IX.

“ No carven Saint in marble niche  
That pilgrims kneel before ;—  
No dream of Eldorado's shore  
On nights in June

X.

“ Can lure across the tossing seas  
With promise more divine  
Than can the beauty that is thine—  
Thine alone.

XI.

“ Lo, this garden of the rich  
Made wide for us, and free !  
With all the crescent witchery  
Of a night in June !

XII.

“ And lo, the overarching trees  
That cover us from sight !  
O Senorita of Delight !  
Here—alone ! ”

## FAREWELL

### I.

I WILL not seek thee for mine own,  
I would not mar thy fate ;  
I will not breathe one vain regret  
That we have met too late.

### II.

I will not venture now to hope  
Thy path may intertwine  
By sweet, unseen and secret ways  
In happier days with mine.

### III.

But, Lady, I would have thee know  
This once ere we do part  
Since first I met thee thou hast been  
An idol in my heart,

### IV.

Before whose solitary shrine,  
When Night o'ercometh me,  
My soul yet keeps one crimson gleam  
To dream and dream of thee.

### V.

To dream what now thou may'st not hear,  
What now I may not tell ;—  
Ah, Lady mine, those dreams are past  
With this—my last farewell !

## THE ARBOR ARABESQUE

### I.

'TWAS in an arbor arabesque  
Where tangling vines did screen  
From watchful eyes, I met thee first,  
O wan and witching, passion-curst  
Irene !

### II.

Thy kinsmen kept thee from the World,  
Cold as a cloister'd maid,  
Destin'd for gold and high degree,  
And deem'd their iron will by thee  
Obey'd.

### III.

A flower to bloom in stately halls,  
Ancestral and alone,  
They thought thee all too chill and pure  
To break the seal of love's allure  
Unknown.

### IV.

Ah, witching one ! I pledge thee still  
For the ruddy wanton tide  
That flush'd the virgin veins in thee  
With young desire that would not be  
Denied !

V.

That welcom'd me in the wandering days  
When once, by starry chance,  
I found thee in that Northern wold  
Reading an Orient rime of old  
Romance !

VI.

Oblivious to all else beside,  
Thine eyes were dreaming o'er  
A quaintly pictur'd open book  
Of tales once told to Lalla Rookh  
Before

VII.

Her minstrel lover left her side,  
In humble guise grown dear,  
To claim her where his palace tower'd  
Within the vale of rose-embower'd  
Kashmir.

VIII.

But what to me that day were all  
The songs of minstrelsy ?—  
Of maids who sigh'd and knights who dared  
In ancient days ?—I only cared  
To see

IX.

Thy silken hammock swinging low,  
In crimson tangles wrought ;—  
Thy body curving light and free  
Within its yielding tracery ;—  
Methought

X.

No houri-haunted bower upbuilt  
By dreaming Saracene  
E'er greater beauty did enshrine,  
Or loveliness surpassing thine,  
Irene !

XI.

Long 'neath the vine-clad arch I stay'd  
Of that sweet solitude ;  
Scarce breathing,—so I found thee fair,  
I would not then retreat, nor dare  
Intrude.

XII.

Where slept thy haughty kinsman then,  
The while I watch'd unseen,  
The tang of those love-tales inspire  
Thy willing body as with fire,  
Irene ?

XIII.

No rumor of the World was there ;  
But round us seem'd to float  
A low Æolian undertone  
From gloom of royal gardens blown  
Remote.

XIV.

And when at last I ventur'd in,  
What words I found to say  
I know not now—I only know  
Thine eyes grew soft, thy voice sank low,  
That day.

XV.

Yet how for me thy love did swift  
As some wild rose unfold  
Under the Sun of Summer-time,—  
Ah, this may not in idle rime  
Be told !

XVI.

But there were days—sweet stolen days—  
Ere dawn'd the wretched morn  
That saw that arbor desolate,  
And *thee* consign'd to gilded fate,—  
Forlorn.

XVII.

That banish'd me to roam, Irene,  
Upon this barren shore ;  
Thou hast thy gold and high degree—  
I go my way and hear of thee  
No more.

XVIII.

Yet still in memory thou are mine,—  
Still one Midsummer night  
For me is glimmering in the past  
With the passion of its last  
Delight.

XIX.

When the elfin zephyrs follow'd thee,  
And their balmy breath did steep  
All the dusk and sultry air  
That waver'd softly round us there  
With sleep.

XX.

For on that night—that only night—  
When thou wast mine, Irene !  
When thou did'st lavish all thy charms  
On me, and tremble in my arms,  
And lean

XXI.

Back in glad abandon to  
My passionate embrace,  
Love leapt to flame that all thy tears  
Could not then quench,—nor after years  
Efface.

XXII.

Out of the arbor arabesque,  
In the deep Midsummer night,  
I saw thee pass, and it seem'd the gleam  
Of a falling star,—and it seem'd a dream  
In flight.

XXIII.

O wan Irene, so far from me !  
I know not where thou art ;  
But I love thee, and I'll love thee till  
Death's final hand shall touch and still  
My heart !

XXIV.

Nay, through the night of the afterdeath,  
And the ghastly vast ravine,  
'Gainst all obstructions of the dead  
I'll win some way to thee, dream-led,  
Irene !

## THE WANTON YACHT

### I.

OVER the sea at sunset  
I heard sweet music ring,  
And I saw a white yacht sailing,  
And I heard a fair crew sing :

Bravehearts ! Sweethearts !  
We sail the Wanton Yacht ;  
And anywhere and everywhere  
That's far away and faint and fair  
Is the goal of the Wanton Yacht ;  
Yo ho !  
For the goal of the Wanton Yacht !

### II.

And long I stay'd to hear  
Their songs that came to me  
Out of the deepening twilight,  
Over the purple sea :

Bravehearts ! Sweethearts !  
We sail the Wanton Yacht,  
Free as the wave and the careless breeze,  
With only our hearts, Sweethearts, to please,  
On the deck of the Wanton Yacht,  
Yo ho !  
For the deck of the Wanton Yacht !

Till the blue of the Summer night  
Grew dark like a sapphire stone,  
And the Yacht was hid from my sight,  
As I sang by the sea alone :

Bravehearts ! Sweethearts !  
Sail on in the Wanton Yacht !  
And would that I were with you this night !—  
With youth and love and the loose delight  
Of life on the Wanton Yacht—  
Yo ho !  
For life on the Wanton Yacht !

## I D L E W I L D

### I.

ONCE in the land of the Maple,  
    In the midmost Autumn time,  
The mellow, waning, yellow,  
    Indian-summer time,  
With the maid Estelle I stray'd  
    To gather leaves in a lonely glade  
Afar in the forest of Idlewild—  
    Forgotten Idlewild.

### II.

And we linger'd there, for we sought  
    The choicest of the leaves ;  
'Twas hard to choose, and we could not  
    Decide on the loveliest leaves ;  
But all that dying Indian day,  
    While it waned and waned away,  
How they floated round us, glinting  
    In the amber light, and tinting  
    All the aisles of Idlewild !  
All the aisles and hidden places  
    Where the forest interlaces  
    O'er the paths in Idlewild !  
How they vanish'd, strangely hinting  
    Of the silent other spaces  
    More remote in Idlewild !

Fell or vanish'd, ever hinting  
Of the secret that effaces  
All the joy of Idlewild !

III.

Till the Gates of the West were open'd—  
O the Gates of the West are wide !  
And the amber light sank down and flow'd  
Away in a wine-red tide ;—  
Away thro' the forest of Idlewild  
In a wine-red, weird tide.

IV.

But the leaves drank deep till they drain'd  
The wine-light out of the West ;—  
The last of the wine, till it stain'd  
Their hearts with the hues of the West,—  
With the hectic hues of the West.

V.

Ah now in the land of the Maple,  
In the midmost Autumn time,  
The mellow, waning, yellow,  
Indian-summer time,  
Disconsolate I roam  
Afar within the aisled,  
Olden, silent, golden  
Forest of Idlewild,—  
Forest of lonely memories only,—  
Silent and golden-aisled.

VI.

But I find therein no solace save  
At a spot made holy with tears ;  
At a spot where the ancient branches wave  
O'er the palest dead that ever they gave  
To that forest made holy with tears.  
And the hours pass there unheeded by  
As I dream o'er the remnant leaves that lie  
Strewn from the dim receding years  
Deep on her grave.

VII.

O Estelle beloved !  
Maid of my heart's one dream !  
Thy vision thro' far Elysian  
Vistas I see in my dream ;—  
Vistas that loom thro' the ultimate West,  
Wherein thy soul hath sank to rest ;—  
O richer than life in a dream sublime,  
Beyond the tremor and touch of Time !

EDGAR ALLAN POE

A STAR-EYED captive, in a lonely tower,  
Look'd o'er a lake outspread in sullen gloom,  
Illumin'd with infrequent lily bloom.  
There wayward Zephyrs sounded hour by hour  
Upon a harp whose pure *Æolian* power  
Beguil'd him, as he paced his haunted room,  
To songs ne'er heard before—voicing a doom  
That from the very Heavens seemed to lour.

He sang the songs of Death till Death, his theme,  
Engulf'd him in that Night of Mystery  
Wherein so often he had peer'd to see  
The trail of vanish'd Love—the Elysian gleam  
Upleading to a starry destiny—  
Twinkling from the very gates of Dream.

## IN THE NIGHT IMPALPABLE

### I.

I HEARD the tolling of a bell  
Thro' a night impalpable,

d stunn'd and stricken downward into nether space I fell ;  
To a sphere

Most curst and drear,

And for the damn'd ordained,

here feeble in the rayless air they bide as souls enchain'd.

### II.

Only unavailing

Vacant spectres round me paling,

Thro' the dismal gloom abysmal

Gape and grin upon me, railing

With a sound of silly laughter,

For they greet me all with laughter,

t oh ! they vanish wailing from the Echoes that come after—

From things that rise enormously

Out of Nothing—seizing me

In a slow unfolding Horror of Infinity ;

Yet within the awful coil

Something still survives to foil

The Horror ere it quite attains

To my soul—and then it wanes

to Nothingness again—and still one hope remains ;

When the Horror shudders down one starry Hope remains

To piece the evil darkness thro' and loosen all my chains.

III.

Athwart the gloom  
In pale magnificence uploom  
    Titanic walls ;

And lo ! my doom is riven by a radiance from those walls ;—  
    By the ruby-tinted hue  
    Of a radiance rolling through  
A lone heart-shapen window carven high upon those walls.

IV.

Then down the far-eurythm'd deep  
    Sounds of passing sweetness sweep  
That lull me into dreaming and the semblance of a sleep.

Etherial

I hear a call  
    In the tranced interval  
Cleaving thro' Oblivion and lifting from its thrall ;  
    And I reach the lustrous edge  
    Of that lonely window-ledge  
To peer among the marvels of the rising carnival.

V.

But ah ! despite  
Satanic splendors opening in the heart of endless night—  
    Despite the masque and pageantry,  
    And music string'd in wizardry  
        Of ways and modes unknown—  
    Down the ruby-corridor'd,  
    Ebon-vault'd, ebon-floor'd,

Halls of Eblis unexplor'd,  
I strive alone to see  
The eidolon of one ador'd  
Whose call uplifted me :  
And those chasmal, lost, fantasmal  
Halls of Eblis unexplor'd  
Yield to me at length the sight  
Of One apparell'd all in white,  
Thro' the wide Pavilion gliding with the wine of red delight :—  
One apparell'd as a woman—  
Yearning to me as a woman—  
With the love I dream'd of  
Once—when human.

VI.

Then elate  
I cling and wait  
For the ransom necromantic yet to free me from this fate :  
But alas ! the incense curling  
From before her keeps unfurling  
Dim narcotic veils between us till I swoon intoxicate :  
From the luring and the lumen  
Of her beauty, more than human,  
Backward thro' the demon deep I swoon intoxicate—  
Beyond recall I swoon and fall  
Into the black Oblivion that now devoureth all.

## O C T O B E R

WHEN I was a little fellow, long ago,  
The season of all seasons seemed to me  
The Summer's afterglow and fantasy—  
The red October of Ontario :  
To ramble unrestrain'd where maples grow  
Thick-set with butternut and hickory,  
And be the while companion'd airily  
By elfin things a child alone may know !

And how with mugs of cider, sweet and mellow,  
And block and hammer for the gather'd store  
Of toothsome nuts, we'd lie around before  
The fire at nights, and hear the old folks tell o'  
Red Indians and bears, and the Yankee war—  
Long ago, when I was a little fellow !

## COQUITLAM

HOW oft I'd steal away, in hot July,  
At early dawn, thro' dell and over hill,  
To hear at last Coquitlam's purring rill!—  
To whip the riffles with some gaudy fly,  
And tempt the leaping trout, alert and shy!

Munching a bit of chocolate to still  
My hunger, as the day grew long, until  
The Sun was shining low upon the sky.

Then, proudly, with the fish that I had caught,  
Go trudging home for many a weary mile,  
Full certain of a mother's welcome smile,  
And that she'd choose the best that I had got,  
And bid me tell her all about it, while  
'Twas cook'd up for my supper smoking hot.

## THE VETERAN

ONE good old friend I had in boyhood's days,  
Who far and wide about the World had been—  
Had battles fought, and sieged cities seen,  
And met adventure in a thousand ways,  
That oft he told to me, in homely phrase,  
Haphazard, like his careless heart, but clean :  
It seem'd to ease the pains that rack'd him keen  
To be the hero of my childish plays.

And when they put the old man in his grave,  
I mind I stood beside—but did not see :  
For thro' a blur of tears there came to me  
A vision as of sunlight, and a brave  
Awaken'd soul outsailing cheerily—  
Uplift upon a wondrous azure wave.

## THAT OTHER ONE.

I USED to go to Sunday-school  
When I was a little boy ;  
I said my catechism pat  
About the wrath to come—and that  
    And holy kinds of joy ;  
For my pretty teacher told me sure  
    If I didn't learn it well  
God some day would stick me down  
    In a red-hot hole in Hell.

### II.

I used to think if God were dead  
    How glad the World would be !  
How all the solemn angels, up  
Where gold counts less than a buttercup  
    Beside the Jaspar Sea,  
Would quit their endless psalm-singing  
    And chuck their harps away !—  
And never a lonesome cherub would cry  
    Upon God's funeral day !

### III.

I felt there was some Other One,  
    Who'd watch and keep it right  
For all the living things that are  
From the grass and the flowers to the farthest star,—

Just Whom I knew not quite ;  
But someone like my Grandmother,  
    Too kind to give a rip  
Whether I went to Sunday-school  
    Or off on a fishing trip.

IV.

Who'd leave the Gates of Hell unlock'd  
    So the devils could all crawl out ;  
And the burning ghosts and the goblins too—  
I oftened wonder'd what they'd do  
    If they could look about  
And see the trees and the Sun again,  
    And feel the wind go by,—  
I used to think those aching things  
    Would be so glad they'd cry.!

V.

Some One who'd fix old Eden up  
    For us as good as new ;  
And never would be jealous of  
Our silly souls if we should love  
    A Golden Calf or two ;  
And there wouldn't be any Forbidden Tree ;  
    But if anything went wrong  
We'd fight it out among ourselves  
    Till we learned to get along.

“ When I was a child I thought as a child ” —  
E'en so, good Father Paul !  
But more and more it seems to me  
That some of the things that children see  
Are the truest, after all.  
And e'en as a baby infidel  
This pearl of faith I won,  
And still I rest content therewith—  
God is that Other One.

## M O T H E R

### I.

THERE'S a voice that I have heard  
Along the Way of Life,  
A voice that soundeth only  
When my soul is worn with strife,  
When I fall in utter weakness  
On the stony endless steep,  
Someone comes and whispers to me  
"Sleep, child, sleep!"

### II.

'Tis the Mother of us all  
That crooneth to me then,  
Soothing me with visions  
And dreams beyond my ken,  
With a song I do not understand,  
Whose words I cannot keep,  
Only the burden of her song—  
"Sleep, child, sleep!"

### III.

O Mother—holy Mother !  
O Mother of my soul !  
Should day departing leave me  
Afar off from my goal,  
Let me fall as a weakling back  
To thy bosom, dim and deep !  
And o'er my failure whisper only  
"Sleep, child—sleep!"

## HARD TIMES NO MORE

THE desert trail hath ended in  
A garden way at last :  
The burden of the iron years  
Of wandering is past :  
Dear Heart ! the very children cry,  
Good-bye, Hard Times, good-bye !

Hard Times come again no more !  
Hard Times come again no more !  
O happy children of the King !  
Hear them sing, sing, sing—  
Hard Times come again no more !

How little in the Wilderness  
The great relief is guess'd !  
Where seek the weary multitude  
Continually for rest !  
And dream not how it draweth nigh—  
Good-bye, Hard Times, good-bye !

Hard Times come again no more !  
Hard Times come again no more !  
O happy children of the King !  
Hear them sing, sing, sing,  
Hard Times come again no more !

The things that seem'd as shadows once  
Alone are real here :  
The glories of the Promised Land  
Shine out before us, dear !  
And we shall enter, you and I,—  
Good-bye, Hard Times, good-bye !

Hard Times come again no more !  
Hard Times come again no more !  
O happy children of the King !  
Hear them sing, sing, sing,  
Hard Times come again no more !

## THE DREAM OF THE DEEP

"We wake and find ourselves on a stair ; there are stairs below us which we seem to have ascended ; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight."

—Emerson.

### I.

**L**O, the Deep hath dream'd a dream  
Of omen sibylline !  
An endless flow of endless dust  
Wherein unnumber'd gods are thrust,  
Who writhe unseen.

### II.

And blind and dumb they be therein  
And find nor rest nor ease ;  
From stupor rous'd by quenchless lust  
For that—they know not what—that dust  
Can ne'er appease.

### III.

And writhing so, they wreak the dust  
To shapes of flor and faun,  
That rise and fall and rise anew,  
Crumbling, aye, as the gods reel through,  
Until—anon—

### IV.

A few see thro' the murky reek  
What spirall'd pathway looms  
In Titan reaches, coil on coil ;—

Ah ! the wise gods know 'tis bitter with toil  
And link'd with tombs !

V.

Yet the air grows clear as they climb, and keen  
With perfume of numberless flowers ;  
With passion of pleasure and poison of pain,  
And tang of things tasted again and again  
Thro' the endless hours.

VI.

But ever they feel one soundless urge  
Ominous under all,  
As wrought from the primal uncontent  
Of some abysmal banishment  
Beyond recall.

VII.

Nor purple bowers of idleness,  
Nor all the feasts of Time,  
Can free the gods of their grim unrest,  
Nor lure them from the awful quest  
Whereon they climb.

VIII.

The ages pass, and they find no end,  
And vain it all doth seem ;  
Yet still they toil for a topmost stair  
Whereon to wake—somehow—somewhere—  
Beyond the dream.

## ILLUMINED

### I.

I WOKE in the Land of Night,  
With a dream of Day at my heart ;  
Its golden outlines vanish'd,  
But its charm would not depart ;  
Like music still remaining,  
But its meaning—no man can say  
In the Land of Night where they know not  
Of Day, nor the things of Day.

### II.

I dwelt in the chiefest city  
Of all the Land of Night ;  
Where the fires burn ever brighter  
That give the people light ;  
Where the sky above is darken'd,  
And never a Star is seen,  
And they think it but children's fancy  
That ever a Star hath been.

### III.

But out from that city early  
I fled by a doubtful way ;  
And faltering oft and lonely  
I sought my dream of Day ;  
Till I came at last to a Mountain  
That rose exceeding high,

And I thought I saw on its summit  
A glint as of dawn from the sky.

IV.

'Twas midway on that Mountain  
That I found an altar-stone,  
Deep-cut with runes forgotten,  
And symbols little known ;  
And scarce could I read the meaning  
Of the legends carven there,  
But I lay me out on that altar,  
Breathing an ancient prayer :

V.

" By the God of the timeless Sky,  
O Saint of the Altar, say  
What gift hast thou for me ?  
For I have dream'd of Day :  
But I seek nor gift nor power,  
I pray for naught but light ;  
And only for light to lead me  
Out of the Land of Night ! "

VI.

Long I lay on that altar,  
Up-gazing fearfully  
Thro' the awful cold and darkness  
That now encompass'd me ;  
Till it seem'd as I were lying drown'd  
Under a lifeless sea.

VII.

There shone as a pale blue Star,  
Intangible—serene—  
And I saw a spark from it fall  
As it were a crystal keen ;  
And it flash'd as it fell and pierc'd  
My temples white and cold ;  
Then round that altar-stone once more  
The awful darkness roll'd.

VIII.

But there was a light on my brow,  
And a calm that steel'd me through,  
And I was strong with a strength  
That never before I knew ;  
With a strength for the trackless heights,  
And scorn of the World below—  
But I rose not up from that altar-stone,  
I would not leave it so.

IX.

“ O Saint of the Altar, say  
How may this light redeem ?  
For tho' on my brow like a jewel  
Its Star hath left a gleam,  
O Saint, 'tis a light too cold and cruel  
To be the light of my dream !”

## X.

Anon 'twas a crimson Star  
 That over the Altar shone,  
 And there sank as a rose of flame  
 To my heart ere the Star was gone ;  
 And out from the flames thereof  
 A subtle fragrance then  
 Went stealing down the mountain-side  
 O'er the lowly ways of men.

## XI.

The Star was gone, but it brought  
 To light in its crimson glow  
 The lovely things forgotten  
 I dream'd of long ago ;  
 And gladly then I had given  
 My life to all below ;  
 Yet I rose not up from that altar-stone,  
 I would not leave it so.

## XII.

And at last was a golden Star ;  
 But I scarce know how nor where ;  
 For it melted all around me,  
 And the other Stars were there ;  
 And all in one blissful moment  
 The light of Day had come ;—  
 Then I reel'd away from that altar-stone,  
 Old, and blind, and dumb.

I dwell again in the city,  
I seek no more for light ;  
But I go on a mission of silence  
To those who would leave the Night ;  
And for this—and this thing only,  
Thro' the evil streets I stray ;  
I who am free to the timeless Sky  
Illumin'd forever with Day.

## THE WAY OF BEAUTY

WHO brings a thought of self to Beauty's shrine,  
Or jealous envy, by so much the less  
Shall feel within his soul her deep impress—  
Shall thrill at quaffing of her mystic wine.  
For Beauty hath no care for thine or mine,  
But wasteth wide in wanton loveliness ;  
And only thus, in self-forgetfulness,  
Shall any share with her the life divine.

O happy he whose heart doth full respond  
To wandering Beauty's spell—wherever wrought !  
He hath a pleasure finer than all thought  
That instant as the touch of fairy wand  
Makes rich the World for him, whate'er his lot,—  
E'en tho' perchance a homeless vagabond.

## THE BUTTERFLY

### I.

ummertime, and a wasted shroud, and the sunlight glancing through ;  
And the stir of a creeping thing withal ;  
Thinking to crawl,—  
It flew.

### II.

s if a yellow pansy from its stem had loos'd and flown,  
Up it flutter'd, scarce aware,  
Thro' crystal air  
Unknown.

### III.

o find the narrow world that was now blossom'd endless wide :  
And sailing on its saffron wings,  
Soon wondrous things  
It spied.

### IV.

round were honied feasts all set in the hearts of a thousand flowers ;  
And merry mates to while away  
In wanton play  
The hours.

### V.

With them it drifted, wing aslant, on veering winds at ease,  
Or ventur'd cool luxurious flights  
To the curving heights  
Of trees.

VI.

Or lone amid the pink delicious petals of a rose  
Anon 'twould linger somnolent  
In the rapt content  
Which knows

VII.

No end to leaves, no end to flowers, and the sweet grass under all :  
Then revel again with its airy clan  
Till night began  
To fall.

VIII.

'Twould cling in careless slumber then to the nearest scented brake,  
Or as the dusky hours wore on  
Perchance anon  
'Twould wake

IX.

With star-enamor'd kinsmen to explore a mystic noon,  
Winging a far, entranced flight  
In the lost light  
Of the Moon.

X.

To settle at length awearied in some lily-chalice pale ;  
Nor waken till full-breasted Morn  
Rose breathing warm  
And hale.

XI.

So passed for it the easy hours ; but Summer waned at last,  
And its flower-body fell away  
As a husk one day  
Offcast.

XII.

et surely as before it knew a joyous wakening,  
So on some new and far-away  
Exultant day  
In Spring

XIII.

nother form shall build itself from out the formless Deep ;  
For outer life befitting well  
The thing that fell  
Asleep.

XIV.

or in the loom of things to be the meanest life hath place  
To mark the way that it shall go,—  
By patterns slow  
To trace

XV.

s long ascent thro' Dust and Death to God's infinity ;  
And evermore the seed unseen  
Of what hath been  
Shall be.

## IN ERRANTRY

BECAUSE I'm drunken with unknown nectars,  
From ways made over-strait I turn ; in sooth  
My heart is only half inclin'd to truth  
Of learned scrolls and saintly calendars :  
Bald Science misses, and Religion mars  
What I have found, tho' blundering and uncouth,  
For I was wronged with Wonder in my youth,  
And dazed with visions of forbidden Stars.

I was a minstrel boy in errantry  
Along the mossy ways of old Romance  
In chase of Beauty whose elusive glance,  
Thro' hapless ventures lured me brokenly :  
But now from her I've had such sweet suffrance  
That this dour World shall never sober me.

TO WALT WHITMAN

I.

HELLO there, Walt !  
Out of sight on the old Highway  
I hear your song :  
I hear the words that you have said for me :  
I, a sayer of words, sing out hello to you :  
And you are not so very far ahead but you will hear my  
words also.

II.

Words, Walt, words !  
Your words, anybody's words, and the words of the rolling  
Worlds !  
But under all the one Word never utter'd.

III.

O Comrade mine !  
Accepting all, eager for all, taking no denial !  
Love shines in you, through you, from you,  
Splendid as the Sun !

IV.

O eagle-eyed ! O Titan-heart !  
I look with you to the heights of old philosophies :  
Looking above and beyond them, shouting ahoy  
To wonders weaving out of Wonder endless in the still  
Eterne.

## V.

But mostly, Walt,  
 I watch you saunter down with huge rejoicing tread  
 Tramping America :  
 Mixing with crowded Manahatta :  
 Swinging an axe in the Oregon forests :  
 Bellowing songs to the Sea.

## VI.

For all your rant and brag about your States—who cares ?  
 But the coming of the lilacs,  
 And the call of mating birds,  
 And the smell of June, with its berries,  
 And the feel of the harvest air,  
 And supple-bodied youth, and clean red blood, and the ripe  
     white quiver of the grown girl's breast,  
 And all the easy common joys of Life to be had for the  
     asking,  
 The beautiful, bountiful flow of things in every land—  
     simple, copious, unrestrain'd forever,  
 The sky and the stars and the winds of God, and the lovely  
     faces behind the masque of Death,—  
 For chanting these my hat goes off to you, .  
 Old stalwart out of days primeval,  
 Earth-born and generous !

## VII.

Down South :  
 And the tide is coming in :  
 I watch you fishing from the edge of the old dock :  
 And a nigger sitting by you in the sunshine :

listen to your lazy chat :  
areless there, happy, smoking a corn-cob pipe ;  
lowing blue incense into the round blue sky :  
alling it all divine.

VIII.

but the Ocean play'd great tunes for you in octaves run  
too deep  
or your tin-ear'd contemporaries to hear !

IX.

tell you, Walt,  
his World lies sick for want of men like you :  
More glorious vagabonds and clean barbarians :  
Monarchs of Life in the making :  
Who find the tracks of God on all sides round,  
And understanding not at all yet laugh content,  
Confident as any babe that sees itself  
Mirror'd in its mother's eyes.

X.

Here's to you, Walt !  
To you and all good tramps of Adam following !  
Free, fresh, savage !  
Afoot on the open Road !  
Taking the trail of the great Companions.

XI.

Comrades, ever comrades !  
What other words to say !  
Comrades, ever comrades,  
On the old Highway !

## THE SEE R

IF I have seen the Gods—the primal Three  
Who play a game that hath no goal in view—  
Who make, destroy, and evermore renew  
Within the bubble Space all things that be—  
Why should I halt and labor soberly,  
Or care to have men find my vision true ?  
Enough, deart Heart, if I impart to you  
The vast assurance that it gives to me !

Their muddy brains would make it all a lie,  
Tho' with most golden words I told it o'er ;  
So much I've seen that I must see yet more  
While Time still gives occasion. Then to die,  
Let loose, and on my single way explore  
The unimagin'd orbits of the Sky !

## NIRVANA

DOWN the ages comes a sound grown dark  
With unremember'd meaning. Many heard  
Fall from the lips of One illum'd a word  
Whose doubtful gospel seem'd to quench all spark  
Of separate love and joy, with promise stark,  
If from their patient hearts still undeterr'd  
They rooted all desire—the boon conferr'd  
Should be to pass from Life without a mark.

Old devotees, dream on ! Old scholars nod  
Over the meaning of the Indian sage !  
But I, awakening in a later age,  
Choose not the deserts where His saints have trod,  
Nor cleave to ancient rites or holy page ;  
Singing on my careless way to God.

## THE CLUE

TO make the great escape—to issue hence—  
To live no more, nor dream among the Dead—  
Nor be with endless change discomfited—  
Think not you need all Time's experience  
To ponder on some granite eminence.  
Enough in any life to find this thread,  
And loosely by its blended strands be led :  
Unmeasur'd Love and sheer Indifference.

Beloved ! would you have me wait for you—  
Your fellow-pilgrim on the formless Way—  
And waiting seek some form of words to say—  
Some novel phrase to make old precepts new  
And draw you swiftly nearer to me ? Nay,  
Mere words have worth no more—you have the Clue !

## CONTENT

BUT God stays—tho' all else fail and fall !  
He seems sometimes a Playfellow of mine  
Who winks at me and laughs—sometimes a fine  
Red Flame to gloriously destroy : a Call  
To bring green Worlds again : immemorial  
A Mood that wakes in me : an Anodyne  
To soothe me unto Death : a Sound divine :  
A dim enamour'd Silence under all.

Amid the jar of things, and in wrong ways,  
I hurt myself continually, and yet  
Withal I stand, and with fix'd eyes forget  
The bitter unfulfilment of my days,  
And feel my way to Him, content to let  
All else between my fingers slip—God stays !

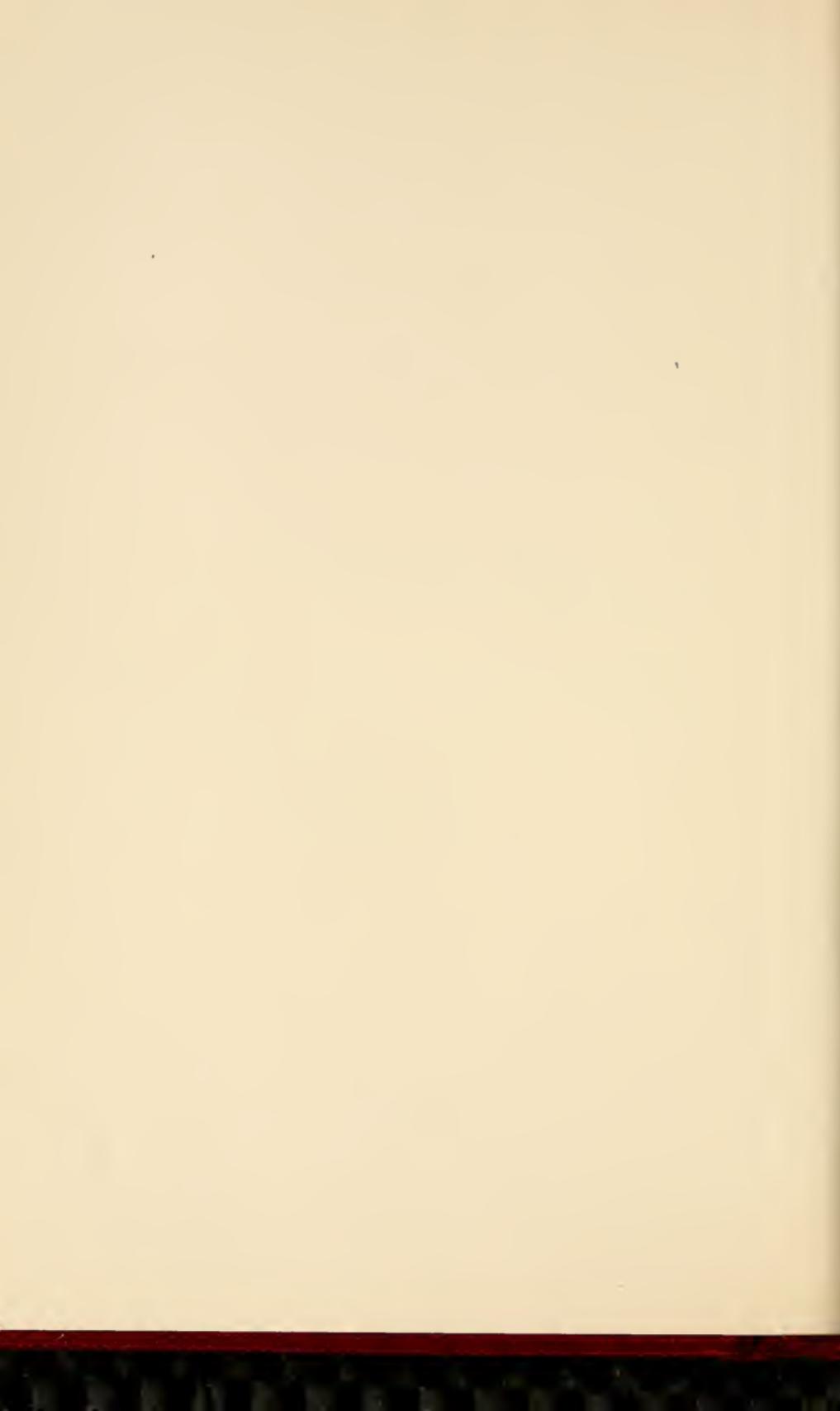
## THE TOMB

AND he is dead at last ! O long ago—  
So long ago it is since yesterday !

The World hath sunken round me, old and gray,  
To sound of endless litanies of woe :—  
Dear God, if I could know—could only know  
    Beyond the creeds and feeble prayers they say  
    That I might find him yet in some sure way—  
How I would laugh against this Tomb below !

I've lost the meaning of the words he said  
    To ease my heart before he pass'd from me :  
    I walk the ruin'd Earth in agony,  
And cry unto the Waste uncomforted :  
    Across the blacken'd skies I start to see  
    His name writ flamingly—but he is dead !

A tale no man hath told before—  
A way no man hath known.



# THE DAMOZEL OF DOOM

## PART I.

### I.

LIKE as a dream it came to me  
In the lapse of a lonely year ;  
In the shade of night I saw the shade  
Of a shrouded maid appear ;  
And drawing nigh it leaned o'er me,  
And whisper'd in my ear :

### II.

“ Cold—cold !  
I come from the ghastly cold !  
Where the dead are ever dying  
Alone in the ghastly cold !”

### III.

And then, as if an agony  
Constrain'd that gruesome haze,  
Its words come forth in hollow sighs,  
The while its eyes did blaze  
Pale lightnings to my own, now fix'd  
In helpless dire amaze :

### IV.

“ I am a starveling out of Hell,  
A wraith of the restless dead,

And whence the damn'd lie damn'd the most  
My riven ghost hath fled  
For lust of the radiant life in thee,  
And the fume of thy heart so red !”

V.

“ I lust for thy blood and the life of thy blood  
But I love thy soul as well,  
For the flame of it lit my own anew,  
This thing is true I tell ;  
And the beating of thy heart it was  
That loos'd me out of Hell.”

VI.

“ For out of the sleep I cannot sleep  
Thy soul was rous'd again ;  
And thy body was wrought to the same fair mould  
As when of old 'twas lain  
Within the dust away from me—  
The body that I had slain.”

VII.

“ O black the night that swallow'd me  
When out of the World I fell !  
Out of the World, and deep entomb'd,  
I found me doom'd to dwell  
Where time is still and Horror stares  
On each—immovable.”

VIII.

“ Cold—cold !  
Alone in the ghastly cold !  
Where the dead are ever dying  
Alone in the ghastly cold !”

IX.

“ Nay, listen ! I heard like far-off sounds  
Sway down thro’ the lees of crime ;  
And golden was their echoing,  
They seem’d to ring a chime  
Of words I said—of love I felt—  
Long since—in the other time.”

X.

“ And echoing they took a shape,  
And circled round and round  
As airy, elemental elves,  
Then joined themselves and wound  
In wreathing ether over me,  
And with a crystal sound

XI.

“ The circle touch’d complete and flash’d,  
And vanish’d suddenly ;  
And Time began again—I found  
Myself unbound and free—  
Free of the silent Horror there  
That stared and stared at me.”

XII.

“ And I was in the outer night,  
And I sought and found thee here ;  
I saw thy body from afar  
As a living star appear,  
And fain to drink and slumber in  
Its crimson atmosphere—”

XIII.

No other word came audible,  
The shade 'gan withering,  
As to my cold and shuddering side  
It vainly tried to cling ;  
Then drifted slow away from me,  
A wasting, wistful thing.

XIV.

Until in the eerie light at last  
I saw it fade and seem  
To sink as it were thro' an ancient grave,  
And sinking it gave a scream ;  
And I awoke and tried to think  
'Twas but a passing dream.

XV.

Cold—cold !  
And are the dead so cold ?  
And are they ever dying  
Alone in the ghastly cold ?

## PART II.

### I.

That dream came not again to me,  
Nor any dream at all ;  
But well I knew, as the days went past,  
There held me fast in thrall  
A something of that shrouded thing  
That wrapped me like a pall.

### II.

An aura drear that sever'd me  
From men and the ways of men ;  
As some great evil I had done  
My friends did shun me then ;  
I felt accurst, and kept apart,  
And sought them not again.

### III.

But O how chill the World did grow !  
And the Sun, as a thing unreal,  
Did glare and glare thro' the vacant day,  
And never a ray I'd feel  
To warm my blood, the light fell thin  
And gray as spectral steel.

### IV.

A pale disease took hold on me,  
And when the night would come  
I had no rest, but sleepless lay

As stark as clay, and numb ;  
And could not stir till dawn would break  
Nor gasp, for I was dumb.

V.

And yet were times all faintly tinged  
With a glimmering ecstasy ;  
Moments that linger'd in their flight,  
Trailing a light to me  
Elusive and wan as the phosphor foam  
That floats on the midnight sea.

VI.

And out of my stricken body then  
My soul would seem to creep,  
And over a sheer unfathom'd brink  
Of silence sink asleep,  
Beyond the shadow and sound of dreams,  
And deeper than Earth is deep.

VII.

Yet ever from those slumber spells,  
That seem'd like years, I'd start  
Sudden awake, bewilder'd by  
A presence nigh my heart,  
As if a soul had stirr'd in me  
That of me was no part.

VIII.

And so three seasons pass'd away,  
And the early Summer came ;  
And still that weird fantasy  
Enshrouded me the same ;  
But now it seem'd as luminous  
With some alchemic flame.

IX.

At length in a garden wide and old,  
A garden all my own,  
One afternoon I lay at ease  
Under the trees alone,  
While the fragrant day fell off in the West  
Like a Titan rose o'erblown.

X.

And lying there I dream'd once more,  
And it seemed that a scarlet bird  
Flew out of my heart with a joyous cry,  
To the topmost sky, and I heard  
Her song come echoing down to me,  
Yearning word on word :

XI.

“ Slow—slow !  
O moments—O ages slow !  
But love shall be my own again—  
Be it moments or ages slow ! ”

## PART III.

### I.

I waken'd in the twilight with  
A fever at my brain ;  
All my veins were running fire  
With blind desire and pain  
Of something that three seasons long  
Within my heart had lain.

### II.

So cruel that first I heeded not  
A faint, alluring tune,  
Trilling round me everywhere  
In the jewell'd air of June,  
As far and wide o'er the darkling sky  
The crystal stars were strewn.

### III.

Till over the rim of the World uprose  
The slow round Moon,  
And a voice from the inner garden came  
That breath'd my name, and soon  
Floated full out on the waving air  
Trolling a golden croon :

### IV.

“ Low—low !  
The Moon lies low !  
O Love ! my Love—come love me  
While the Moon lies low ! ”

V.

To the inner garden fast I sped  
Till I came to the inmost tree ;  
O the peace of a thousand years I'd give  
Again to live and see  
The pallid maid of the white, white arms  
Who there awaited me !

VI.

But I have not the words to tell  
The marvel of that tryst ;  
Yet 'twas no phantom I did woo—  
A virgin true I kiss'd,  
With lips full red, and eyes agloom  
With peerless amethyst,

VII.

And body lined and shapen to  
The last of love's delight ;  
I heard her whisper : "I am thine,  
And thou art mine, to-night !"  
And she loos'd the silver zone that bound  
Her garments blue and white.

VIII.

"Low—low !  
The Moon lies low !  
And my love is mine to love me  
While the Moon lies low !"

P A R T I V .

I.

“ O my beautiful—my bright !  
Sweetheart in the cool dim night !  
Calling thro’ the starlit silence  
Low my name !

II.

“ With that sound there comes to me  
A feeling lit with memory  
Of regions lost and times o’erlaid,  
And love forgot.

III.

“ Take me, O dream-laden bride !  
To the rapture of thy side,  
In this bower of unrevealing  
Velvet gloom.

IV.

“ Long, my beautiful, I’ve waited  
For this charmed night—this fated  
Hour that yields thee up to me  
From years unknown.

V.

“ Now shall be unveil’d to me  
All thy maiden symmetry,  
Seen like naked moonlit marble,  
Pure and pale.

VI.

“ Till no more thou canst reveal me  
Of thy beauty, and I feel thee  
As a flower whose touch instilleth  
Chill delight.

VII.

“ My Sultana ! in thine eyes  
Let me gaze, where passion lies  
Slumbering still within their sultry  
Purple deep !

VIII.

“ Till within my arms at last  
In love’s embrace I hold thee fast—  
Till beneath my own I feel  
Thy heaving heart !

IX.

“ While I gather—while I crush—  
All the fruits of love—the lush  
Delirium that dwelleth ’tween  
The lips of pain.

X.

“ O long—O last supreme caress !  
O ultimate deliciousness !  
O slowly sinking, satiate,  
Erotic swoon !

“Swoon, my beautiful—my bright !  
Dream far down in the violet night !  
Down—far down, where reigns the dim  
Lethean sleep !

## PART V.

## I.

My heart is a dry and wither'd thing ;  
And I that am young am old  
With brooding in the silentness  
On that caress and fold  
Of white, white arms in the Summer night ;  
But the end is still untold.

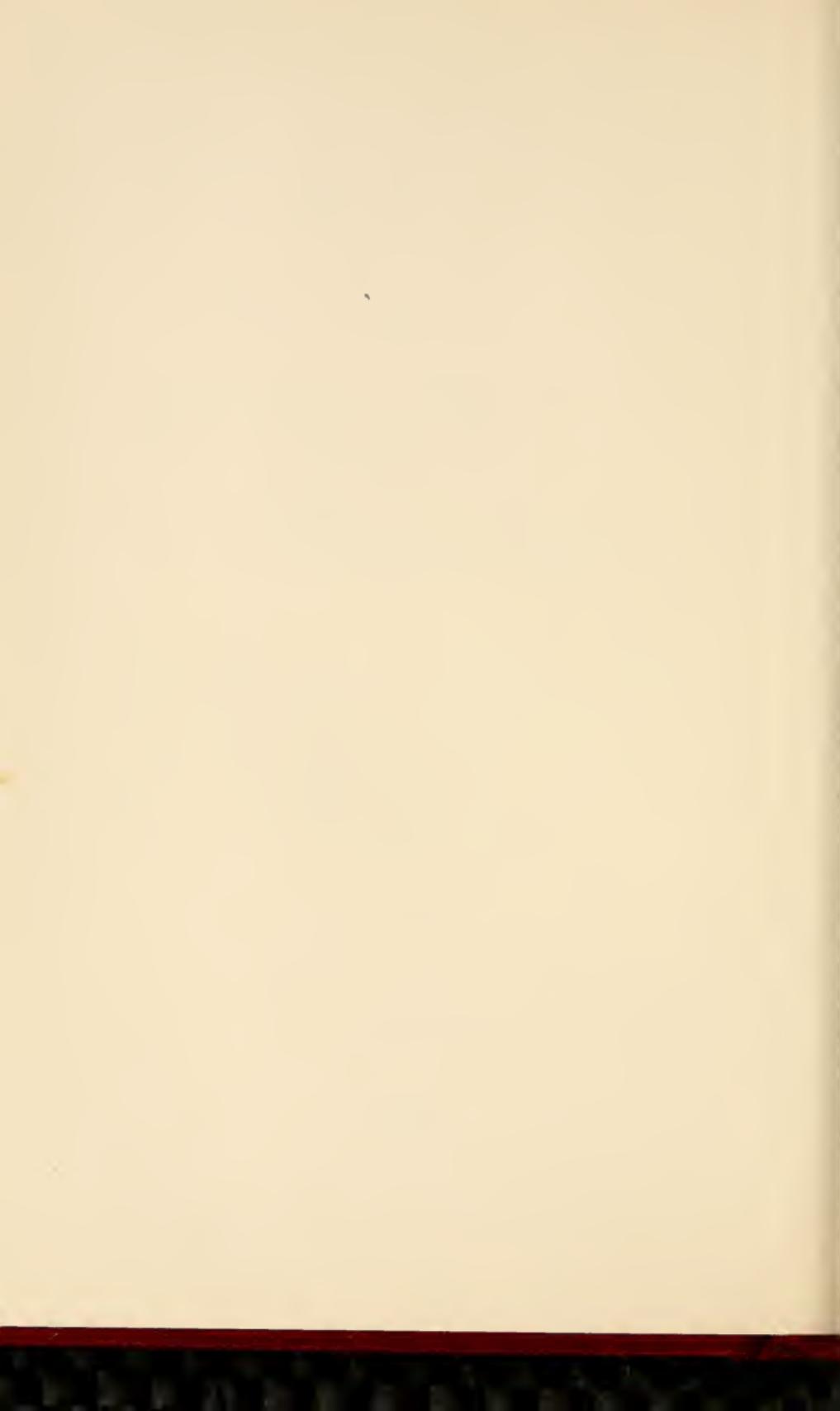
## II.

Nor shall be—for the end is not !  
My soul, 'tween hopes and fears,  
For the pallid maid awaits and yearns,  
Her memory burns and sears :  
But I it was who let her pass  
To the peace of a thousand years.

## III.

Slow—slow !  
O moments—O ages slow !  
But love shall be my own again—  
Be it moments or ages slow !

For there be wondrous valleys hid  
Thro' Hell's infernal zone.



## THE VALLEYS OF RELIEF

### I.

OVER a bleak and barren plain  
Where flowers never bloom—  
Where never slant the gold sun-bars,  
Nor any stars illume  
The dim and sullen atmosphere  
There brooding o'er its doom—

### II.

Alone there went an aged man,  
Who bent and cower'd low,  
As if across that hopeless waste  
In fearful haste to go,  
But could not, for his palsied legs  
That painful dragg'd, and slow.

### III.

For age not come of mortal years  
Had over him unroll'd ;  
Like wither'd leaves on winter trees  
Dull memories and cold  
Still rustled dryly at his heart—  
But old—old—old !

### IV.

And, tremulous, full oft he turn'd  
His haggard ashen face,  
Expectant aye whence he had fled

To loom in dread menace  
A stealthy Horror, that e'en now  
Crept after him apace.

V.

And long he fared with labor'd steps,  
And many moaning sighs,  
Till sudden changed the scene for him—  
He paused in grim surmise,  
And gazed, with feeble hand uplift  
Unto his bleared eyes.

VI.

For on that plain, whose barrenness  
No future may redeem,  
Now with emotion manifold  
His eyes behold a stream  
Of solemn waters rolling with  
Unbroken ebon gleam.

VII.

Behind the haunted desert lay,  
Before a mystery,—  
What hazard there of better plight,  
What dark respite may be,  
Not knowing yet he ventures on,  
Round glancing fearfully.

VIII.

Yet when he reach'd the reedy shore  
To brave the river's brink,

Despair almost like peace he felt  
The while he knelt to drink,  
Thinking in those deep waters there  
How easeful he might sink.

IX.

But as he bent to take the draught  
He spied a nearing light ;  
And down the river slowly drew  
A lone canoe in sight,  
Wan as a crescent newly born  
Upon the verge of Night.

X.

At that his eyes were steadfast set  
Upon its glimmering rim ;  
Above the current visible  
The dainty shell did swim,  
Until it gleam'd upon the tide  
All fair abreast of him.

XI.

Then forth the old man stretch'd his arms,  
With mutter'd prayer and hoarse ;  
As if that vessel frail could hear,  
It 'gan to veer, perforce  
Obedient to his one appeal,  
And shoreward bent its course.

XII.

A moment more upon that shore  
And he has parted thence ;  
He feels the soothing waters roll,  
Relieving soul and sense  
From every grief by reason of  
Its slumberous influence.

XIII.

With closed eyes he lieth there,  
And one by one is shorn  
Of every thought with sorrow fraught,  
Till he hath naught to mourn ;  
And far upon the bosom of  
That river he is borne.

XIV.

His age doth gradual dissolve ;  
He is no more uncouth ;  
He feels within an elixir  
As if it were in sooth  
The blooming of some pale, delicious  
Afterflower of youth.

XV.

And now he's 'ware of warbling sounds,  
Faint echoing and blurr'd ;  
And now of one more clear and strong ;  
A wondrous song he heard ;  
It seem'd the happy dreaming of  
Some lone entranced bird.

XVI.

A slow and golden slumber song,  
Whose languid numbers gloze,—  
A witchery of syllables  
In woven spells to close  
Sad eyes to long forgetfulness,  
And marble-like repose.

XVII.

At length the bird's sweet arias  
In fluted notes subside ;  
He thinks how near its covert he  
Would peacefully abide ;  
Then once again his eyes unclose  
Upon the river's tide.

XVIII.

Around him fell a warm twilight,  
The waters now were blue ;  
Far-off appear'd on either hand  
A terraced strand in view,  
Uplading to such gardens as  
No mortal ever knew.

XIX.

And while he gazed that wan canoe  
Unerringly did steer,  
As 'twere a thing of destiny,  
And presently drew near  
A gentle shore outjetting to  
A mottled marble pier.

XX.

And mooring there he stept ashore,  
Still joyously intent  
On seeking for that singing-bird,  
And garden-ward he went,  
Strolling thro' the solitudes  
In fearless wonderment.

XXI.

'Mid spaces smooth and wide between  
Where grow gigantic trees,  
Whose branches ever quiver in  
The faint continual breeze,  
And tangle up the placid sky  
With shifting traceries.

XXII.

Yet many steps he had not gone  
Ere strewn upon the ground,  
Or gleaming from recesses dim,  
Or near to him, he found  
Abandon'd bodies beautiful  
In charmed slumber bound.

XXIII.

Comely youths and maidens in  
Secluded dells alone,  
Or else in easy groups reclin'd,  
With arms entwin'd—all prone  
Like fallen statues carven out  
Of pallid Parian stone.

XXIV.

And some were e'en more fair to see  
And shone translucent white ;  
They seem'd as waning to a sheen  
Of pure serene starlight ;  
And even as he gazed one slowly  
Faded from his sight.

XXV.

Awhile he marvell'd tranquilly,  
And then his eyes did stray  
To where an ancient man appear'd,  
With flowing beard and gray,  
Who musingly toward him bent  
His solitary way.

XXVI.

But as he came his footsteps scarce  
The silences bestirr'd ;  
He seem'd so rapt with reverent awe,  
He neither saw or heard  
For holy thoughts that compass'd him,—  
He pass'd without a word.

XXVII.

And gravely thro' the mighty glades  
Upon his way he kept,  
That ancient lone somnambulist,  
Who nothing wist except  
The reveries beguiling him  
Where all the others slept.

XXVIII.

Then had he mind to follow on  
The Elder for a guide,  
Ere yet the forestry between  
Should weave a screen to hide  
His all-unheeding Druid form  
Which on ahead did glide.

XXIX.

And long thro' aisled vistas that  
Bewildering intervene  
He follow'd on till he espied  
A vast hillside all green,  
With sloping lawns and fountains deckt,  
And high whereon is seen

XXX.

A wondrous gleaming palace built  
Of alabaster stone,  
With many a niche and window set  
And minaret far flown  
'Bove golden domes outswelling like  
Fantastic fruit o'ergrown.

XXXI.

And in its centre wide beneath  
An ever-open door  
Gives promise of all pleasantness,  
With rich recess and store  
Of priceless treasures taken from  
The palaces of yore.

XXXII.

Yet that so easy seeming hill  
Soon fills him with amaze,  
Now near, now far, the palace gleams,  
Like one he seems who plays  
With quick reverse of optic glass,  
Until at length he strays.

XXXIII.

Unto a fountain playing in  
A single column cool,  
Whose showering waters musical  
With diamonds bejewel  
The silver'd air returning to  
Their slumber in the pool.

XXXIV.

And by that fountain's grassy marge  
One peerless maid doth lie,  
Uncompanion'd as a star,  
Her beauties far outvie  
All others in those gardens seen,—  
He will not pass her by.

XXXV.

Her face, half-pillow'd on her arm,  
Is to his own upturn'd  
So tenderly, that it did seem  
She in her dream discern'd  
His coming, and tho' bound in sleep,  
Still for that coming yearn'd.

XXXVI.

His last desire finds body here  
The while he bends to kiss  
Her lips that open like a flower—  
What dulcet hour is this !  
And half she wakens in his arms  
While he doth swoon for bliss.

XXXVII.

There hath he fallen by her side,  
All outer life is spent,  
Unto that pale encircled sleep  
He yields in deep content ;  
Thro' ages long to pass away  
In utter vanishment.

## CACTUS

I'VE wandered over Western plains where naught  
Of moving life will choose itself a home,  
Save creatures of grotesque or hateful breed,  
Rattlesnakes and hairy tarantulas,  
And red-rock lizards, with their kindred huge,  
The gila-monsters, whose envenom'd breath  
Shrivels the crawling centipede, they say,  
And curls in death the silent scorpion  
E'er he can sting, yet passes o'er unharmed  
The horned toads that slumber 'mid the sands  
There glimmering hot beneath the rainless skies.

And yet upon those plains so desolate  
No spear of grass for any season comes, . . .  
Where e'en the arid sage-brush ventures not,  
Those plants uncouth I've seen that clearly show  
Nor stem nor leaf, but structur'd all in one,  
Perennial grow in rooted shapes perverse  
As ever Danté dreamed or Doré drew.

Some tall as palms rear cloven pinnacles  
Proudly through the torrid atmosphere ;  
And some like mimic reptiles spread and sprawl  
Their prickly arms along the parched ground.  
Some squat and round, and deckt with hoary hair,  
Dwell hermit-like among the sunset rocks,  
Or lean above the canyon's beetling verge,  
Where down—sheer down a thousand feet below—  
The twilight green is fleckt with pallid foam

Flung from the rapid Rio as it rolls  
'Tween walls immemorably old.

And succulent they seem, yet arm'd around  
With myriad thorns like bayonets at the charge,  
Lest any luckless beast upon these wilds  
From them should seek precarious sustenance.  
And some do keep within themselves a cool  
Sweet reservoir of waters, gathered up  
In those brief seasons when relenting skies  
Resolve at last the roaring thunder-clouds  
In sudden, unrestrained relief to rain.

But for them all there comes a time of bloom,  
When their distorted bodies wake and thrill,  
And feel within themselves a revelling  
Of splendid passion, culminate at last  
In wealth of gorgeous blossoms. Nonchalant  
They dance and flirt with every passing breeze,  
And riot 'mid the spiny bayonets  
Like odalisques, luxuriant to fill  
With orient odor and high carnival  
Those waste and unaccustom'd solitudes.

Some lift a scarlet glory to the sun,  
While all day long their golden stamens swell  
With velvet pollen, drifting o'er their mate  
Until her last desire be satisfied.

Some, virgin-like, await the veiled hours  
Of one long-chosen eve, when pure and pale

With perfect rapture they at length unfold  
Their loveliness beneath the Southern stars,  
And all exhaust in one voluptuous night  
The yearned-for bliss, perchance, of patient years.

E'en so, those quenchless, isolated sparks  
Of that recurrent fire that men call Life  
In such odd guise do there express themselves,  
With virtues individual and rare.

In all that valiant fibre what's involved ?  
God knows ! But surely Character, whose vim  
Will hold thro' every shape that bodies it  
In striving up the stony tracts of Time.

Let that be as it will ! But I have known  
Some fellows of my own so gifted with  
A like persistent faith they would extract  
From circumstance to wither other hearts  
A very elixir of faith and hope.

And thus I call to mind an old-time friend :  
A granite Presbyterian he was,  
Of thorny doctrine and contracted creed,  
Whose soul as in a desert pitiless  
Dwelt far removed from pleasant ways of men,  
Despair'd for deeds that he had never done,  
And fear'd all things beneath the brassy skies  
Foredoom'd unto inevitable Hell.  
Yet there were times—we ne'er could tell for why—

When o'er his dour old face would fall a glint  
Of sunny humor and of transient peace,  
As if his straiten'd soul, in very stress  
Of its own native sweetness, had put forth  
Some fair quaint flower to bloom incongruous  
Upon the barren branches of his faith.  
E'en such a time it seem'd to me when once  
In San Francisco, years ago, I stroll'd  
With him along the water-front and saw  
A drunken sailor on a sudden halt  
Before a wounded cur that yelping lay  
Upon the road. No passer-by took heed,  
But, muttering words of maudlin sympathy,  
The sailor stoop'd unsteadily and caught  
The mongrel creature in his arms. At once  
It stopt its cries, and, in brute gratitude,  
'Gan lick the fellow's foolish bearded face,  
While he, flinging a customary curse or two  
Upon the jeering urchins of the street,  
Stagger'd from the street with his new charge :  
A homeless, worthless pair, whether they sought  
The refuge of some dingy lodging-house,  
Or forecastle of some tramp merchantman,  
Or tarry little schooner on the bay.

But my dour friend look'd after, as in doubt,  
Bewilder'd to approve that nondescript  
Haphazard deed whose vagrant influence  
Yet warm'd his aged heart like rare good wine :

Then, smiling, murmur'd slowly to himself :  
" Ah, Tam—I'm maybe thinkin', lad, that yon  
Poor vagabond Samaritan and a'  
Wee feckless dogs and daft-like sailormen  
Maun no stop aye in Hell—nor no for long !"  
And tho' he said no more I felt the glow  
Of white compassion that encompass'd him ;  
A radiance straight from some eternal shrine  
Beyond the bounds of aught his creed confess'd.

I had another friend of different sort :  
Gentle-born and led in luxury  
Thro' childhood's days, life open'd fair until  
Death robb'd him of the friends he needed most,  
And faithless guardians left him penniless.  
Yet early for himself an envied place  
Above the shrewd competing throng he gain'd  
On one great city's mart, where sweeps the tide  
And traffic of her richest merchandise.  
And if he dream'd of riches then his dreams  
Were founded well. But other things he dream'd,  
For in his blood was more than bargaining,  
And he had soul too great to hold himself  
Penurious on the road to mean success.  
The days went by. And so it was that in  
That rosy-vision'd time—the June of youth—  
When all things beckon'd him, he thought he found  
One woman's face more fair than all his dreams—  
One woman's heart beyond the price of gold.

Alas ! When to another's arms she went,  
Loveless 'mid all lovely circumstance,  
The star that lit the perfect way for him  
Went darkly out, and from the waste of years  
His promis'd happiness forever pass'd,  
Like as a momentary bright mirage  
Pictur'd on an endless wilderness.  
And tho' he went undaunted through all lands,  
Grappling with a perverse destiny,  
Everywhere the way to him was barr'd,  
And everywhere he found a harder lot :  
It seem'd as Fate a single vengeance wreak'd  
On him for follies of a score of lives.  
Yet when he came amongst us in the West,  
Altho' his shaggy hair was streakt with gray,  
He spoke like some fresh-hearted, plucky boy,  
Ready for new adventure anywhere.  
A surly, thwarted, hopeless set we were,  
Stranded in that barren mining-camp,  
But soon for him we found a welcome place,  
Won over by the wholesome, cheery way,  
He settled down to that rough life of ours.  
He work'd with me a wasted season through  
Upon the poorest claim of one poor creek,  
With temper cool and even all the while,  
And when I had no heart to sing he'd sing  
And twang on his old banjo by the fire  
To drive away the loneliness of night ;  
He had the knack somehow to make me feel

That any luck was good enough for us,  
That with it all a man could be a man,  
And come up smiling from the hardest blow  
That Fate knew how to give. Poor old Jack !  
We loved him for his sunny, careless ways,  
And there was no better fellow in the West !  
The fever 'twas that took him off at last,  
And in the shifting sands we buried him.  
We roll'd a boulder there to mark his grave,  
And on it scrawl'd his name and when he died,  
But made no show of service over him,  
For there was no man of us could say a word.  
Yet when the rest had gone I linger'd still,  
And sat upon that old, striated stone  
To stare in stolid mood against the West,  
Wherein the ruddy Sun had sunken low :—  
Sat brooding on the tangle of our lives,  
That seem so gone awry and objectless,  
Till out of the wreck of unrelated things  
One of the moments came that come to me  
Drifting loose from Time, and wonderful  
With alien fragrance and Elysian airs,  
While absently I mutter'd words of him,  
Witless for all I know—but no one knows :  
“ His drowsy spirit dreams of me,” I said,  
“ Among the outer glades of Paradise !”  
And I arose, yet ere I went away,  
Upon that grave, for lack of better thing,  
I planted cactus for a covering.

## FORTY

### I.

BILLY, I seem this late October day  
To hear the toll of some dull-throated bell !  
They're calling time on me, and the game's to play :  
But what the hell, Bill—what the hell !

### II.

Let me alone awhile ! I want to stay  
Unanxious for an hour o'er what's ahead :  
I'll make no vow at forty ; this birthday  
We'll give to memories of the Past instead.

### III.

Turn back thirty years ! Sit down and try  
To call the times we had, the things we said,  
The fresh sweet taste of life so long gone by,  
When you and I and Dick, and others dead,

### IV.

Made great romance beneath a Western sky,  
Living thro' all the Seasons presently :  
Then was no Past, and for the Future—why  
That was a treasure-cave of things to be.

### V.

Now you have won a name and places high,  
And little Dick has grown so great and gray :  
The luckier ones are seen no more, while I  
Go wandering an unprofitable way.

VI.

Last year, at Ottawa, I mind Noël,  
After each story that you told, would say,  
Sipping old brandy in that bum hotel,  
“La vie est triste, mon brave—soyons gai !”

VII.

And that's a song for all, when all is said :  
Billy, I'd like to be in some café  
With some of those choice fellows that you've led  
And put a purple finish to this day.

VIII.

Tho' I'm no inky pessimist, nor bred,  
When I am hurt, to howl against the sky,  
Yet there be times I turn a troubled head,  
And for one hour of rich abandon sigh.

IX.

But let it go ! To all I've had to say  
Hear that dull-throated bell make one reply !  
Half-time is call'd for me, and the game's to play,  
And still I've made no score—no score—yet I

X.

Have many dreams like jewels hid away,  
And many love me—more than I can tell :  
And my heart is warm to all my friends this day,—  
So what the hell, Bill—what the hell !

## LONE WOLF LAMENT

### I.

DINK if you will to happy days  
And things to be—but say  
Where are the fellows I used to know?  
Where are my friends to-day?  
  
Wow! Hear me howl!  
For Shad and Pete and George and Jack  
Who took the long trail and left no track:  
O never a one of them all comes back,  
And the winter-time is here!  
  
Wow! Hear me howl!  
For Olive and June and white Irene,  
And the Mexican Kid and little Corinne:  
Daughters of joy who have not been seen  
This many and many a year!  
I'm a lone old wolf, and I've lost my pack,  
And the winter-time is here:  
Wow! Hear me howl!

### II.

Many are gay and many are fair,  
And some still come at my call:  
But I've gone lame, and can run no more,  
So what's the use of it all?  
  
Wow! Hear me howl!  
For Shad and Pete and George and Jack  
Who took the long trail and left no track:

O never a one of them all comes back,  
And the winter-time is here !  
Wow ! Hear me howl !  
For Olive and June and white Irene,  
And the Mexican Kid and little Corinne :  
Daughters of joy who have not been seen  
This many and many a year !  
I'm a lone old wolf and I've lost my pack,  
And the winter-time is here :  
Wow ! Hear me howl !

III.

I dream'd last night I ran with them  
Under a gold-red sky,  
Where the mountains rose from the green prairie—  
And I woke and wisht to die.  
Wow ! Hear me howl !  
For Shad and Pete and George and Jack  
Who took the long trail and left no track :  
O never a one of them all comes back,  
And the winter-time is here !  
Wow ! Hear me howl !  
For Olive and June and white Irene,  
And the Mexican Kid and little Corinne :  
Daughters of joy who have not been seen  
This many and many a year !  
I'm a lone old wolf and I've lost my pack,  
And the winter-time is here !  
Wow ! Hear me howl !

Drink if you will, and drink on me !

But this is the toast I give :

Live hard with your pack and live yourselves out—

Then ask no more to live.

Wow ! Hear me howl !

For Shad and Pete and George and Jack

Who took the long trail and left no track :

O never a one of them all comes back,

And the winter-time is here !

Wow ! Hear me howl !

For Olive and June and white Irene,

And the Mexican Kid and little Corinne :

Daughters of joy who have not been seen

This many and many a year !

I'm a lone old wolf and I've lost my pack,

And the winter-time is here !

Wow ! Hear me howl !

## CHINATOWN CHANT

### I.

I GO down to Dupont Street  
See my very good friend :  
I have something good to eat  
With my very good friend :  
Feel damblue and want some fun,  
Play fantan with Wun Fat Bun,  
He think me just Number One,  
He my very good friend.

Yum poi—I no care !  
Yum poi—you no care,  
Sometime good time alla time maybe !  
We no care—yum poi !

### II.

Hello, how do, come in, sit down !  
You my very good friend !  
You come best place in Chinatown,  
You my very good friend !  
Too much cold and rain in street,  
You look sick, me stand you treat,  
Fix up something good to eat  
For my very good friend.

Yum poi—I no care !  
Yum poi—you no care !  
Sometime good time alla time maybe !  
We no care—yum poi !

III.

Spouse you like some extra-dry,  
    You my very good friend :  
Spouse you like some mo-goo-gai,  
    You my very good friend !  
Fine chop-suey, guy-see-ming,  
Bamboo-stick in chicken-wing,  
Mushroom stew with everything  
    For my very good friend.

Yum poi—I no care !  
Yum poi—you no care !  
Sometime good time alla time maybe !  
We no care—yum poi !

IV.

Plenty eat and plenty drink  
    For my very good friend !  
You stay here all night I think,  
    You my very good friend !  
I lock fast big outside door,  
Have best time you had before,  
Sing-song girlie come some more  
    For my very good friend.

Yum poi—I no care !  
Yum poi—you no care !  
Sometime good time alla time maybe !  
We no care—yum poi !

Sing-song girlie dance for you,  
Sing, my very good friend !  
No more now you feel damblue,  
Sing, my very good friend !  
Too much drink and too much fun  
Just enough for Number One,  
You know nothing when you done,  
O my very good friend !

Yum poi—I no care !  
Yum poi—you no care !  
Sometime good time alla time maybe !  
We no care—yum poi !

## L A U G H T E R

GLORY be, the corner is turn'd,  
And we've given the slip to the slim Hoodoo !  
Come, Moriarty, I think we've earn'd  
The right to loaf, don't you ?  
Our score is paid, and we've money galore,  
Enough to last us a month or more,  
And never a thing to do !  
You're hungry you say ? Well, I am too,  
But stroll this way for half a mile,  
Sure the sun is good this afternoon,  
Good for a pasty-faced gossoon,  
Like you, d'ye hear, Moriarty !  
Aye, 'tis a blessed afternoon  
For you, you pasty-faced gossoon !  
I'm talking too loud ? Go on—go on !  
I know what I'm doing I tell you !  
You're hungry you say—you want to eat ?  
Well, I'm at home on Easy Street,  
And I'll show you a tavern to your taste—  
To your taste, d'ye hear, Moriarty !

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Aw, take your time, boy, what's the haste ?  
There, where you see that ugly baste  
Ayont the Barbecue,  
Where the lettering is half arased,  
'Twas gold when it was new.

Make out that name there if you can  
With your cock-eye : *The Black-and-Tan* :  
That's it : 'tis kept by a Mexican,  
And that's where we dine, Moriarty !  
It has a long deep-rafter'd room  
In the Mission style ; 'tis a man's room.  
An sure you'll like this Mexican,  
A fellow to follow a light amour,  
A picaroon and a troubadour,  
Much of your sort, Moriarty !

\* \* \* \* \*

Hey Miguel ! Come hear me tell  
This hungry friend of mine  
How this place of yours is for epicures  
Who like a shady place to dine !  
See this long deep-rafter'd room,  
Half alight and half in gloom,  
And yonder a cactus red in bloom,  
Just to your taste, Moriarty !  
Somehow it puts me in mind of Yvette :  
You remember—little Yvette ?  
Will you ever forget that night when she trackt us  
Into the old Savoy, and cried  
For us to take her East again,  
And we hadn't the price—and then—and then—  
Alright, Miguel, by the window here :  
Little Yvette—poor little Yvette—  
She always was fond of a cactus !  
Yes beer, Moriarty, beer !

Then order whatever you wish—a dish  
Of chowder, perhaps a sole ;  
But of things come far and things come near  
I fancy an onion omelette  
With bacon on the side !  
Or what d'ye say to a steak Creole  
With a sweet potato fried ?  
You like these things done Spanish,  
And it isn't a Friday yet ;  
New raisins then and a pint of port  
To finish on ; they say 'tis good  
To iron the blood of a broken sport,  
And they keep it here in the wood.  
O very well, you know your cue !  
Yes, that will be all, Miguel, thank you,  
But see that 'tis hot and Spanish !  
And now while I roll me a cigarette  
Tune up that old guitar  
And sing while we wait, Moriarty !  
Sing new songs, and sing till you banish  
Out of my brain this vain regret ;  
Sure that's what you're for, Moriarty !  
Sing new songs to that old guitar  
Of things come near and things come far,  
While I forget, forget, forget,  
Watching the rings from my cigarette  
Rise to the rafters and vanish !

\* \* \* \* \*

Watching the rings ! How each of them alters !

Each of them alters and alters—and alters—  
Moriarty !—see !—they're swinging like halters  
Just over our heads as they climb !  
And after—and after—and after—  
Christ ! hear that devilish laughter—  
That devilish gurgle and laughter !  
And there !—see there how each rafter  
Is red—dripping red all the time !

\*      \*      \*      \*      \*

No, no, Miguel—I'm well, man—I'm well !  
My nerves that's all—'tis passing—this spell :  
Moriarty can tell—there's nothing to tell !  
Roll me another cigarette,  
And sing, damn you ! Sing and forget  
That laughter—that laughter—hereafter !

## VOLANA

### I.

THERE'S a by-road the saints fear,  
And the wizards seek in vain ;  
Ayont the day 'tis quite near,  
Yet the way of it is too queer  
For me to make it plain ;  
But we find our track by the Zodiac,  
Then a body parts in twain,  
And we be lift in a mode to the mere  
Mass a madness vain,  
A dream or delusion vain.

*Yolana avie avie avie !*

*Yolana vekana vor !*

### II.

But what and O what may the mass know  
Of the things that are done of us ?  
On the round hill where we go  
To bide our time in the pale glow  
For Yolana marvellous ?  
And visions evoke by sweet smoke  
And breathings tremulous ?  
Nay, the sound of words may not show  
The things that are done of us—  
Remotely done of us !

*Yolana avie avie avie !*

*Yolana vekana vor !*

III.

A gold star in the West glow'd  
Thro' a night obscurely clear ;  
'Twas the dry time when the winds bode  
Thro' the tree-tops, and the tree-toad  
Answers eerily ;  
The dwarf came with the swart name  
A-whispering in my ear ;  
And I nodded and took the by-road  
Thro' the night obscurely clear  
As a smoky-topaz is clear.

*Yolana avie avie avie !*  
*Yolana vekana vor !*

IV.

Where the lone pine-tree flings  
A ragged shadow down  
We light the fire, and the dwarf sings  
To keep away the bad things  
That glimmer about and frown,  
As we mix the wine and make the sign  
They made in the sunken town :—  
Then O a glory of light wings  
Bearing Yolana down !

*Yolana avie avie avie !*  
*Yolana vekana vor !*

V.

But what and O what may the mass know  
Of the things that are done of us ?

On the round hill where we go  
To slumber in the pale glow  
Of planets pendulous?  
And out of the skies materialize  
Yolana marvellous?  
Nay, the sound of words may not show  
The things that are done of us—  
Remotely done of us!  
*Yolana avie avie avie!*  
*Yolana vekana vor!*

VI.

O the twinkling stones of faëry  
When Yolana comes!  
All set in the greenest jewelry,  
While the magic smoke goes bluely  
From the burning magic gums!  
And we troll the chants in a ghost-dance  
To the monotone of drums,  
Till we lapse for sheer enchantery  
When Yolana comes!  
*Yolana avie avie avie!*  
*Yolana vekana vor!*

# IN AMBER LANDS

## FRAGMENTS

### I.

IN a luminous valley once I awoke  
To the sound of amber lutes ;  
And I ate of the bread of the Romany folk,  
With elvish herbs and savory roots,  
And I drank of the innocent wines  
Made by their maidens from mandarin fruits  
Pluckt from low-lying luxurious vines  
In the somnolent heart of the valley.

And the Romany folk have a simple creed :  
To make with their hands whatever they need,  
And to live and be kind in the Sun :  
To be one with the good brown Earth, and eat  
Good things the Sun has shone upon  
Till they be ripe and sweet :  
And watch the flocks meanwhile that feed  
In the blue up-lands of the valley.

And aptly enough they sow and spin  
In manner of antique industry,  
And metals they mold and various glass  
And motley pottery,  
Taught by priests of a gentle class  
In league with pale high Powers,  
For whom they have builded singular towers

In a grove of cypress trees,—  
Towers of granite and bronze, wherein  
Magic they make and medicine,  
Or busied with their dim auguries  
The hollows of space and cycles immense  
They measure with intricate instruments.

But I mind how more it pleasur'd me  
In the drowsy grass for hours and hours  
To lie with the faintly-conscious flowers,

Far up on the slope of the valley ;  
Or run with the younger Romany folk,

So handsome and sturdy they be,  
At play in a forest of maple and oak,

A-romping healthily—  
A-romping unkempt and all at their ease,  
And kindly under the kindly trees  
Doing whatever and ever they please

Consistent with courtesy.

O in youth I sail'd unusual seas,  
And still I recall me lands like these,  
Where they do whatever they please, dear Lord,  
Whatever and ever they please !

## II.

Roaming I met the gentle maid  
Whom forest-folk and hunters call  
The Chatelaine of Ronzival.  
'Twas under a cliff in the everglade

Where the icy waters bubble forth ;  
In velvet green was she array'd  
After the fashion of the North :  
O gentle maid, for thy heart's ease  
Venture with me far over the seas !

There is a room in Ronzival  
Rich with bronze, and panell'd all  
In oak grown dull with time ;  
About the lancet windows there  
Masses of ivy climb ;  
And some few roses, fair O fair,  
Wave in the Northern summer air !

The Sun was sinking thro' the pines,  
While I was guest of the Chatelaine ;  
Ruddily in slanting lines  
Thro' each lancet window-pane  
It lit the panell'd inner wall  
Of that room in Ronzival,  
With its bronze and quaint designs  
And stilted things armorial :  
O gentle maid, for thy heart's ease,  
Venture with me far over the seas !

At table by a window-seat  
The gentle maid sat long with me,  
And shyly of her courtesy  
She bade me drink and eat ;  
Out of a hammer'd silver dish  
She chose me cakes and comfits fine,

From a twisted flagon dragonish  
She pour'd me amber wine.

O gentle maid, our game is play'd,  
The dragon is calling, calling !—  
While over the cliffs in the everglade  
    The lonely waters falling  
Blanch at the sound, and shiver afraid,—  
    Aye, 'tis the dragon calling !

With chilling breath and bitter rime  
Cometh soon the winter-time :  
Ah, see how she has grown so frail,  
Her form so slight, her face so pale !  
The hoary giants of Niffelheim  
    Will take her craftily,  
And in a vault with marble stay'd,  
Where long-forgotten saints have pray'd,  
Her delicate body will be laid,  
    Cover'd with greenery :  
While down the ragged silver steep  
Where the gnomish waters creep  
Somnolent, sonorous, deep,  
    With her ancient friends  
Lost to thee her soul shall sleep  
    Till the legend ends !  
Nay, gentle maid, for thy heart's ease,  
Venture with me far over the seas,  
And we shall go free of their wizard hands,  
Away and away in the amber lands !

## III.

From Mozambique I sought Zambar  
On board an old felucca :  
And nigh the Mosque in the Moon Bazaar  
I got me a chanted hookah :  
Its outer bowl was all inscribed  
With golden demasceneries ;  
Themes I think to be founded on  
The amorous songs of Solomon,  
Or Paynim mysteries ;  
But the learned Moulah whom I bribed  
Gave me no meaning of these :  
Only, observing the courtesies,  
To me he show'd, while the fire in it glow'd,  
A manner of taking my ease ;  
From the worry of life, with its folly and strife,  
A marvellous good surcease.  
And the years have come, and the years have flown,  
But the hookah still hath power ;  
And many a scintilating hour  
I win in the midst of miseries,  
Smoking aright in the manner unknown,  
Observing the courtesies.  
For then—O the soul of me understands  
My ways lead into the amber lands,  
A vagabond here, if you please—among these—  
But a rover by right in the amber lands.  
I have my chanted hookah still,  
But now, when its fragrant bowl I fill,

And its dreamful smoke I draw and blow,  
Watching it go—slow—so—  
Round and round the carbuncle glow—  
O then I remember things like these,  
How in youth I sail'd unusual seas,  
    And I would a-roving go.  
I have my chanted hookah still,  
But the core of the world has not been seen,  
And lands unknown yet lie between  
    The roots of Ygdrasil.  
And what of that garden Hesperides,  
Forgotten this long, long while?  
And the palmy cliffs of Hy-Brasil  
    And good Saint Brendan's Isle?  
And they tell in Arabian histories  
Of venturings to ravish me,  
And delectable zones of heathenry  
    Down under the Lost Indies!  
But I—I would know of their verity,  
    And to what each tale alludes,  
So I will again to the solitudes,  
    And the winds I will be loving,  
And leave these weary latitudes  
    And for the love of God go roving:  
For O the soul of me understands  
My ways lead into the amber lands,—  
A vagabond here, if you please—among these—  
But a rover by right in the amber lands.

## THE LAST SONG

### I.

L ONE, Heart, lone !  
And the Gates are barr'd above !  
O Heart with my Heart alone !  
Love !

### II.

Cease, Heart, cease !  
For the last red embers gleam !  
O Heart from thy sorrow cease !  
Dream !

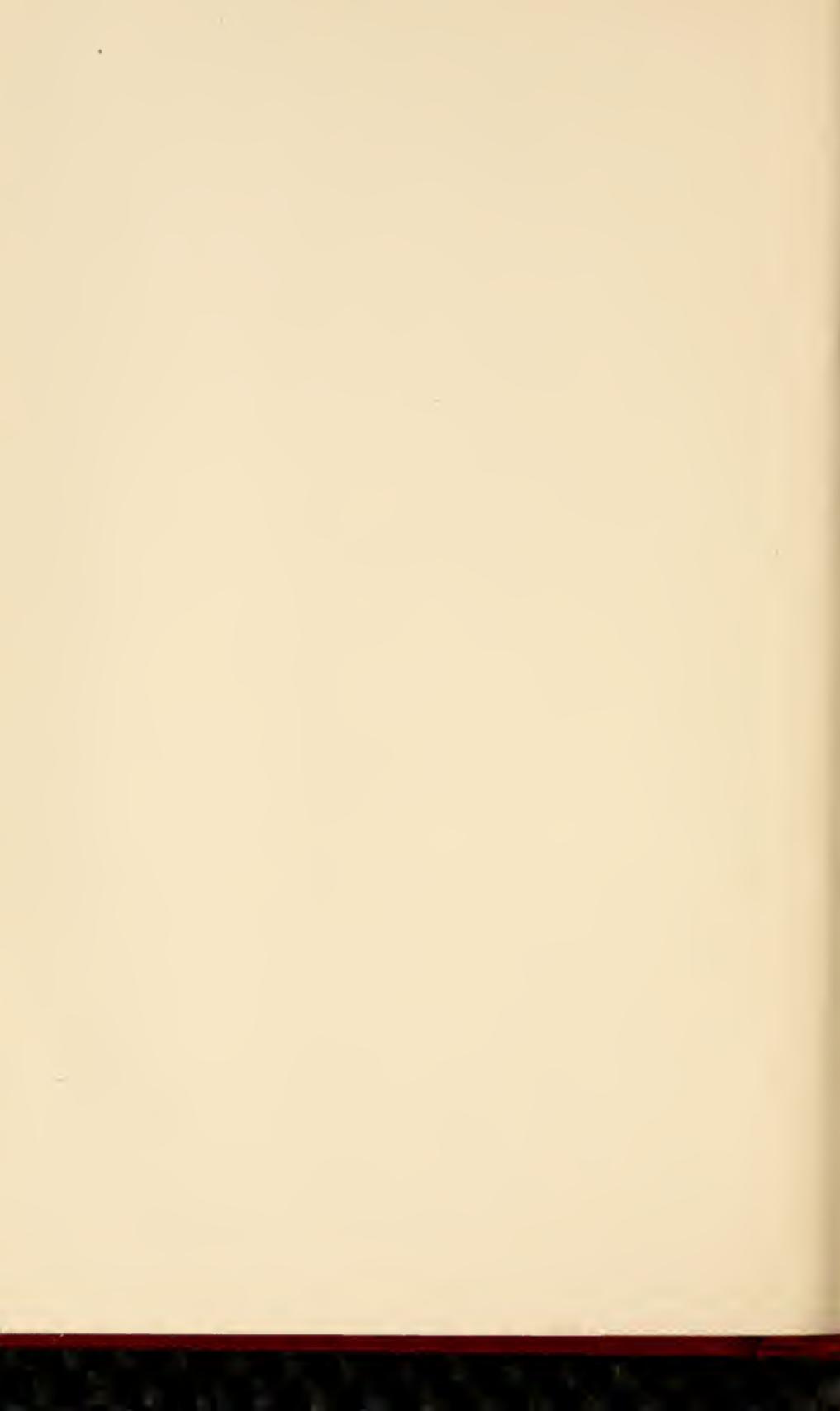
### III.

Still, Heart, still !  
God's night is round us deep !  
O Heart to my Heart lie still !  
Sleep !



## NOTES

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“ F E Y ”

Fey : literally “ On the way,” “ Death-bound.” A Saxon word denoting a Celtic mood. One who not only realizes himself on the inevitable way, but through some unusual experience in some instant of Time, has wakened to an alien, inexplicable Existence that leaves him bewildered, foolishly indifferent, madly impersonal, to the concerns of Life. To the Highlander the full meaning of the term is not expressed in either of the following passages, but it lurks between them :

“ The Scotch peasants have a word that might be applied to every existence. In their legends they give ‘ Fey ’ to the frame of mind of a man who, notwithstanding all his efforts, notwithstanding all help and advice, is forced by some irresistible impulse towards some inevitable catastrophe. It is thus that James I—the James of Catherine Douglas—was ‘ fey ’ when he went, notwithstanding the terrible omens of earth, heaven and hell, to spend the Christmas holidays in the gloomy castle of Perth, where his assassin, the traitor Robert Graeme, lay in wait for him.”—*Maurice Maeterlinck*.

“ A mermaid had once met a piper on Sandag beach, and there sang to him a long, bright midsummer’s night, so that in the morning he was found stricken crazy, and from thenceforward, till the day he died, said only one form of words ; what they were in the original Gaelic I cannot tell, but they were thus translated : ‘ Ah ! the sweet singing out of the sea ! ’ ”—*Robert Louis Stevenson*.

“LONESOME BAR”

“Triple golden years”—(Third stanza, fifth line.)—The Klondike gold-rush, the greatest in history, took place from 1897 to 1900, during which period the Canadian North yielded about one hundred million dollars in placer gold.

“On a lay.”—(Sixth stanza, first line.)—A phrase originating perhaps with the sealers of Behring Sea, with whom it meant an allowance, in lieu of wages, of a certain percentage of the value of seal-skins secured by the hunters. In mining parlance, to “work a claim on a lay” meant to have an agreed percentage of the clean-up or output.

“I mush’d along.”—(Ninth stanza, fifth line.)—Mush—mush on—corruption of French Canadian “marchons,”—the travelling word for men and dogs throughout the Canadian North and Alaska.

“Sourdough.”—(Twenty-first stanza, second line.)—Early prospectors in mining regions of the Far West carried with them a lump of sour-dough, in lieu of yeast, for making camp-bread, and were dubbed “sourdoughs.” In the Yukon, however, the term was generally applied to those who had spent an entire winter in that region during the first years of the gold-rush.

“Mac an Diaoul—Peishta-Mor.”—(Thirty-sixth stanza, third line.)—Gaelic, meaning “The offspring of Satan—the Great Beast.”

“THE DAMOZEL OF DOOM.”

“The peace of a thousand years.”

“The Abbot gave me much instruction in matters of religion. One day, in a discourse on fundamental virtue, which I found difficult, he touched at some length on the nature and conditions of Hell. And I remember, in describing those regions of Hell which underlie the Paradise of the West, he stated, incidentally, that souls are only loosed therefrom by exhaustion of the livid, lurid or dark emotions that keep them there—by that, and the re-awakening of desires. By some of these desires the souls are drawn outward to Earth again, while through others, more subtle and fine, they pass into the Paradise of the West as naturally as a butterfly rises from the chrysalis. But having attained this state, and feeling supreme relief from recent pain and horror, they are prone to remain inactive, become lethargic, and are soon overcome by the delicious atmosphere of the place. And thus they lie peacefully intoxicated for a thousand years. Then their lives end. But the root essence of them all, I was told, is drawn upon again by influences ever seeking occasion for incarnation. And so, in Limbo, awaiting the birth conditioned by their divers natures, they and all manner of planetary life remain in suspense, like to the clouds in the sky, which await opportunity for return to Earth in endless drops of rain.”—*The Teaching of Tao.*











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